

# State Superintendent's Blind and Visual Impairment Education Council

## AGENDA – Meeting #56

March 1, 2016

10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Resources for Libraries and Lifelong Learning  
2109 S Stoughton Rd, Madison, WI

Call to order  
10:11 PDD

Introductions

Phone:

On site:

Public input and comments

From Lisa Tomberlin to Julie Hapeman and Stacy Grandt re: Nemeth vs. UEB math, and encouraging Wisconsin to stay with the BANA guidelines. Stacy Grandt went over the draft document she made in relation to what other states have, in order to make a Wisconsin policy. It is in alignment with exactly what LT said in her statement. Stacy has made a notebook of many states and their UEB/Nemeth Math policies that Council members can take a look at. Read some pertinent parts, such as from California, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, Nebraska, Minnesota. Minnesota also has a statement regarding Braille Math Implementation, and we based our draft on theirs. SG had a conversation with Illinois, and it is their intent to use Nemeth for math as well. The bullet points in the document (the reasons why we stick with Nemeth) are well thought-out, but the Council may want to review and create their own. This document is a start.

Nancy Thompson: What is the difference between UEB Math and Nemeth? SG – I am not qualified to answer, Chris or Cheryl, are you familiar? Cheryl Orgas – Nemeth is a special code that relates to Math and Science notation. It handles very specific things to math and science – all notations as well as numbers. UEB is not as robust in handling those things. If we eliminated Nemeth it would affect especially upper level students in Math and Science in dealing with these subjects. It weakens people's ability to function efficiently in Math and Science. Chris Zenchenko – it comes down to, whether the short hand that you use, if you look back at what you have written, and you can't reconstruct the original intent was. That is what happens when you go to a more simple code in math and music. Both systems are insanely complex as they are. When you take away some of the details, you lose the ability to address math in that kind of details. NT – why would anyone want to do that? CO – it isn't logical. SG – their reasoning for doing that, that I heard at APH annual meeting, is that this is a decision that should be made by IEP teams, and not up to states to dictate the type of code. My comment to that is that if it is unavailable, which there is only a handful of transcribers doing UEB math, it doesn't make sense, as there would not be access to materials. It is also really difficult to have transcribers doing both.

Nissan Bar Lev – what is the purpose of this statement? Why does the Council want to have this? What is the desired impact? SG – someone on the Council asked us to create one. NBL – what would be the most impact – are we attempting to

CO – I am the one who requested a statement. There is confusion, and this statement puts this issue to rest and provides support to the students and teachers.

SG – the Wisconsin guideline for transition to UEB doesn't mention Nemeth, so this document could be added or we could modify the transition guideline.

Fred Wollenburg – I like the document as a representation of the final recommendation of the Council.

SG – I did run this by the Minnesota folks.

CA – above and beyond sending a solid message. It is also important for Wisconsin to support BANA. It lends credence to the standards that BANA pushes.

SG – ask Council to review the document and provide feedback and support within the next two weeks.

NBL – restructure the document as a motion. Have it as a standing document of support by the Council. Then this could be voted on at our next meeting.

Julie Hapeman – as a Council it seems we are solid on this. But are we going to ask for public input on this from those who have expressed concern.

NBL – by our next meeting, the minutes reflecting this discussion will be published, which will allow comments to be made by the next meeting.

JH – Minutes need to be done in time, and public meetings notice published as well.

NBL – increasing efforts to be transparent by posting the minutes as well as the next meeting dates.

CZ – can't officially be published until approved

FW – can publish as draft until then.

Mandy Jordan – Martha Berninger and I are working on working getting a website set up on the DPI website.

MB – need to determine where on the DPI website makes sense for the Council. Perhaps on the Vision page.

SG – I can assist in facilitating this since the Vision pages on the DPI site are under my name.

NBL – at some point all the Councils should be in one location, rather than having to search all over the DPI site for each special area.

SG – I will make the document into more of a declaration, and send to Council members for feedback. Then we will post it as a draft document on the Council website for review until June 21.

NBL – as soon as we have the link to the DPI location, we need to send the link to the all the listserves to alert stakeholders.

PD – historically, were they posted?

NBL – there has been some, varied in the past.

PD – website to increase participation in the Council.

CZ – Once it has a home, we will be able to get demographic info for page hits, document downloads, etc. To show whether it is making a difference or being used.

CO – I think it is great to have the minutes in a place where people can find them and for us to have public input. But it is also the Council member's responsibility to be checking with our constituents since we are representing these groups. We need to be actively listening and seeking in our own communities to what people are saying.

NBL – absolutely right, we are representing these groups and their perspectives.

CO – Julie has been great at representing the teachers. When I was a new teacher I would have been more comfortable talking to one individual than submitting testimony or public input in front of a committee. Less intimidating to contact an individual. Need to let people know who we are, so they can come to us and bring information to the Council, and if anonymously, then that can happen.

PD – I agree, we are looking for as much input as we can get, and it can only strengthen the field. And I can see where it can be intimidating to bring information to the Council. If folks have issue they can report to one of the members. We need to be open to suggestions on how to improve what we do, and how we can improve the field in general.

SG – In order to get public input regarding the Braille Math Implementation Statement, we need to move quickly because the DPI assessment team is quickly looking at the next school year testing, etc. So while we are looking for input, we are going to need to move forward before June 21 in order to let assessment team and textbook orders know.

NBL – Forward Exam accommodations were just posted – braille is a “non-embedded” accommodation. Any comments?

SG – we heard loud and clear following the Badger Exam, that TVIs want hard copy braille for the Forward Exam, so that is what is available for this test.

NBL – do you see this continuing into next year?

SG – yes, unless we told them differently.

PD – I do have a report on the Forward Exam to share with the Council and our experience with it to share later.

NBL – posting the document in support of Nemeth, the minutes, upcoming meetings, Council members. Asking stakeholders for feedback.

NO – How comfortable do you feel saying you are going to post something that is a statement from that group, on something that wasn't indicated on the agenda as a possible topic.

NBL – it is a draft, and will be reflected in the minutes from today that we are discussing a statement of support. It will be posted for our meeting in June. In the minutes it will say that we are seeking stakeholder feedback for the next meeting in regards to the draft document. What is the most appropriate timeline for the recommendation? Do we need to allow more time?

SG – It is a time sensitive thing. The sooner we can give the assessment team information the better. We have had discussions regarding this, and it wasn't until the last meeting that we were aware that anyone had questions regarding Nemeth vs UEB Math, because we were following the BANA guidance document.

CZ – During the December discussion, the impression I got was that we are going the Nemeth route, and that Stacy's assignment was to make sure we haven't overlooked anything critical. She validated the direction that we all felt was the right one, and this document is the result of that research. I question the value of tearing it apart and adding to it.

CO – I concur that belaboring this anymore keeps us from having certainty in the field. I don't know of any dissension, I am just seeking a clear message.

NBL – Post the information, ask for feedback, make a decision at the next meeting. Is that sufficient?

FW – Yes, and I don't think I see any inconsistency in making recommendations to the Assessment Team now, and making the document final in June. Very comfortable with that.

CO – Wisconsin already made the decision, and the Council is wanting to support and back it up.

NBL – The only question is allowing the transparency for the stakeholders to review and endorse.

JH – I think that it would be great to get stakeholder input, but as a Council we are comfortable with what this says. Dissension may not mean we would make any changes, but gives them a chance to express their thoughts. But that doesn't mean we are changing it.

PD – we are issuing a statement of support, but ultimately if an IEP team decides that UEB Math is the right way for a student, we can't dictate that.

NBL – absolutely right. All we can do is create a statement that we think is the most appropriate thing to do, and hopefully IEP teams will abide by that. But if there is a team that chooses to do something else, that will be a separate issue that will be addressed under IDEA.

FW – the bullet points are really clear in this statement regarding that it isn't the ONLY thing you can do, it is for the sake of efficiency, and that they need to recognize that if they choose a different approach, there will be additional considerations the district and team will have to take into account.

SG – Our state transcribers will be transcribing Nemeth, and our tests will be in Nemeth.

CO – So does that mean that IEP teams could go with EBAE code? UEB is just a recommendation as well then?

NBL – anything we do is a recommendation based on IDEA. It is left to the IEP team. If the specific method of instruction isn't in IDEA, it is.

FW – the way I read this, the statement makes a recommendation for a primary support we can give at the state level.

NO – Do districts who may choose a different route recognize that they will not have support for materials? Do they realize?

SG – Our timeline regarding UEB discussed that the state transcribers will be doing UEB, and that the intention is that all students are moving to UEB. There are no districts discussing anything different to our knowledge. This statement serves as an exclamation point to what is already happening.

FW – making sure SED are aware is very important.

PD – What is the path?

FW – Let Stacy make the recommendation, then finalize at the June meeting.

MJ – will announce when we have the website, and specifically point out the feedback request regarding this document.

Resources for Libraries and Lifelong Learning and Talking Book and Braille Library Updates

TBBL – Linda Vincent – we had a good year again. For 2015 our circulation was up 1.2% which is quite good. Outreach was up 33.3%! We have been having ABLE record Milwaukee Magazine for distribution. Have added Readers Digest and Guideposts as well, which helped triple magazine circulation. All three on the same disc. In 2016 we are discontinuing the old cassettes, and are calling the machines back in, over 50,000 cassettes pulled in. If there is something that absolutely has to be on cassette, we do have the machines and can send them out, so we will still service them. We need to recycle them while NLS is providing that service.

CZ – like having them all without having to download separately. Encourage Newsweek.

LV – NLS has picked up a lot of digital magazine for Bard or subscription. We will consider Newsweek!

RLLL - Martha Berninger – I have reached out to Curt Keifer, my supervisor, to ask him his advice for the webpage position.

This building is only 1/3 occupied at present. Moving to GEF 1 building in 2018. Unsure if RLLL will be staying in current location. In process of completing upgrade in broadband. Feel it is important to maintain this building as a COOP back up site. I am responsible for filing a report regarding the buildings use and plans. We have a fair amount of space here. In preparation for this meeting, I was reading through past Council minutes, and was struck by notes regarding constraints on production of materials. I am in the process of a series of discussions regarding this building. Before those discussions conclude, wanted to reach out to this group to see if there was any way to utilize the available space in this building to ease materials production, we would be open to that. If there was any way to utilize volunteers in the Madison area to utilize that space to assist, whether recording, transcribing, etc, we are open to that discussion. Even if it isn't physical space, if there was a way to support in terms of outreach, social media, etc, we would be happy to talk about ways that we might help raise the visibility of all of our programs and services.

11:20 WCBVI Outreach Updates – Stacy Grandt

Since we last met, we have concluded a UEB course for transcribers and TVIs for credit through Viterbo University. Participants had to write a paper about the course, and how they will be implementing UEB with their students, etc. I brought a couple of the papers to share. Shows the training we are providing, which we will continue to provide.

Mentoring Program – have discussed previously. This has grown into a Teacher Induction Program. We will be discussing at the three spring PST meetings. The program really involves having Vision and O&M PDP reviewers, a Vision Professional Network (electronic map of their locations throughout the state). The intention is to be able to communicate with each other areas that people have particular interest or competence in, the UW-P TVI program, and Instructional Coaching. DPI has been placing a focus on instructional coaching in education in general, and we see a need for that in our area specifically as well. Moving around the state this spring getting feedback from teachers in the field as well as electronically. Alisha Ragainis, Kay Rhode and Kay Glodowski will be invited to the next meeting to present the plan and the feedback they have received.

11:25 - WCBVI/DPI Updates – Peter Dally, Director, WCBVI

Enrollment continues to go up, 59 now. Last year had a large enrollment. We have been giving a lot of tours to potential students recently as well. School just celebrated 166 years. Great subject area teachers and TVIs continuing to do stellar work. The elementary program is taking off, and is at the point where we will need to split the group due to size. Very encouraging to see that happening. We have had some students come for their 45-day observation, who have returned to their districts.

Kim Heimerl is doing a great job, learning the ropes as principal. Working very closely with our new Dean of Students Andy Soto and Stacy Grant in Outreach, the key to the success of our operation. New facilities manager Joel Olson as well, for WCBVI and WSD. A very large job.

Beautification Committee – minor updates to improve campus aesthetics.

STAR system – proving to be very time consuming. Chris – is the accessibility improving?

CZ – the time is unfathomable. The amount of glitches has been very consuming. Also have been working on accommodations, and have met with Affirmative Action folks as well. It takes far longer for users in accessibility mode than regular users. Have now rolled out a fix for that mode to work better, and have discovered a lot of people who don't need accessibility mode using it as it is far more simple. We will be working on the travel forms, etc. Also agreed that there will be a separate path for disability health tickets, which will include some other individuals to help. Making significant progress.

PD – in the past the business element was about 10% of my time, and now it is about 70%. Complicated that our business Director has gone out with a serious injury, and will not be available for a number of weeks, and a lot of things she handled, cannot be duplicated by a lot of additional work. And many don't have the access granted in the system. A great learning experience, but cannot understate the time commitment.

Forward Exam – saw a web demonstration with Troy Couillard from DPI Assessment Team. At our last meeting we discussed the braille provider for the hard copy braille exam. I have had a chance to discuss this with Troy, and the contract is through National Braille Press.

CO – checked in with Jennifer Dunham, who is the president of BANA, and braille director for NFB, she gave me a green light for NBP as being a good choice.

DRC is in the company in charge of administering the Forward Exam. They do have a Wisconsin Office, and experience implementing testing procedures in Wisconsin. They have been doing the Access Test for ELL students. In addition, they have been working in 13 other states administering tests for some time. The Demo site – still experimenting with Screen Readers. Have a call set up with the providers and DPI to discuss that there needs to be more options for screen readers for the test. They are just starting to develop the platform working with screen readers.

CZ – Discussion on incompatibility of HTML5 and Internet Explorer. This testing company is going to have to look at the platform, the code, and various screen readers such as NVDA and Voiceover in addition to Jaws and WindowEyes.

NBL – the way I understand it is the Forward Exam in Braille is paper. Is Wisconsin working towards an imbedded braille option?

PD – not at this time, just looking at screen readers and expanding the number of options available. What does the Council recommend in regards to embedded braille? We have been content with this option while they are getting the rest of the system up and running.

CZ – the impression that I get is that this exam isn't a leveled exam like prior tests were.

NBL – that is a feature that was supposed to have taken place with Smarter Balanced. The problem is that technologically it was never implemented with that test. One of the RFP requirement for the Forward exam was to not have that feature included.

CZ – If the leveling isn't a significant part of the exam, the fact that braille isn't embedded in it isn't a problem, since the content isn't as dynamic. Makes the prospect of using hard copy braille a lot more palatable to the field. Braille displays are expensive and add a staggering amount of complexity in programming as to which models to support. If embedding isn't essential, and we have the capability to provide hard copy braille, it isn't the issue to push right now.

CO – I agree to wait and see what the test is like. Hard copy is a good option, and important for math and science. Braille displays are only one line at a time, this is a great hindrance, and isn't the same as having the whole page right in front of you. My understanding is that the difference is there is no difference between the test for sighted students in comparison to the test for students who are blind.

SG – the test is exactly the same, there is no leveling.

CO – wait and see how it goes this year before we make any recommendations in terms of braille.

PD – thank you for reinforcing the opinion that we go with hard copy braille and not to push the embedded braille option. Prefer to focus on screen readers and magnifiers

NBL – with so many changes, it will be good to wait, and then provide feedback regarding the administration, etc, then look at embedding, if it is even necessary.

CO – yes to screen readers but also magnifiers in relation to Zoom Text and Magic and Eye Zoom. Users with Low Vision are often at a disadvantage in that area.

PD – yes display options was the next item. Magnification capability is 200%, which is insufficient for some of our students. Jeremiah Beasley is looking at this limitation. Contrast, colors, etc seem powerful. There is also a text to speech element that seems to be working well.

JH – this is being discussed on the WISVIS listserv today actually, shared questions and comments from teachers today.

PD – good parallel conversation, and good to see the teachers testing it as well. Jeremiah will work on this and we will look into it. We would like to issue an email to the field to ask for feedback.

Stephanie Klas – I am a parent of student with low vision, and we run into issues with text size on standardized testing all the time, not being sufficient for him. It would be important to look at both Windows and Mac embedded magnification as well.

NBL – perhaps Pete can send the accessibility guidelines/accommodations to the Council.

PD – Absolutely.

CA/SG/PD – discussion on company response of instructing folks to use a larger monitor to make large print, and explaining to them and working with them on that barrier.

SG – I can collect the input, and share with Jeremiah.

NBL – this has always been a challenging area, in addition to a large monitor, they also say that magnification can be made with an assistive technology device, but doesn't specify.

CZ – that is nice, but until we can check that out, with different programs, it is not very valuable information.

Physical Education Issue – Julie Hapeman, at last meeting, concern that the DPI PE requirement does not take into consideration the needs of students with visual impairments. It doesn't allow, as in the past, substitution for PE, using some other sort of physical activity. In the past students would have been able to do an outside physical activity. Required to take a PE class that involve ball sports, contact sports, etc – items that are contraindicated in their medical and IEP paperwork. When it was brought up at MPS, we were developing a summer PE class for High School students that were modified, etc, but it was canceled due to budget cuts. Having our students in these classes, but unable to participate, does not benefit the student and is not safe. Many districts don't have the ability to offer an appropriately modified PE course. I have been told that DPI requires certain things with no flexibility. This seems short sighted, and only addresses the main population of students, and isn't fair for our students. It's not that they can't do physical activities, they just don't have appropriate physical activities available. It would be good to have an opportunity, that through appropriate documentation, student could participate in a sport that is meaningful and appropriately modified, and receive credit for it.

PD – NBL and I have discussed with Suzan VanBeaver at DPI, it is our understanding that an adapted PE teacher in conjunction with the IEP team could make that work.

JH – we are being told that the student cannot receive a full diploma

FW – I read the adaptive bulletin each time – the guidance we relied on was that the program and the course work needs to be supervised by an appropriate licensed PE teacher. There is a line between waiving PE credit and modifying/adapting PE credit. It is under the supervision of the licensed PE instructor, as long as the district and documentation supports.

JH – Yes but scheduling is prohibitive (having an instructor assigned to specific students)

NBL – safety of students, and misunderstanding of DPI requirements. The way FW explains is the situation. Congress requires a student be involved in a Phy Ed program. Only PE or Adapted PE is listed on IEP. IDEA requires that the student participate in a program under the supervision of an Adaptive PE teacher. The IEP team would have to develop a goal in relation to this.

JH – I am trying to document, and want to be able to approach the Curriculum director with appropriate information.

NBL – an IEP team has to identify how the student would participate. If IEP team checks the box of APE, the school district must implement an adapted curriculum.

JH – a challenge may need to occur then.

NBL – JH need not be in the middle. Perhaps have DPI compliance person attend our next meeting. What are the rules/regulations that School Districts are required to follow in order to provide appropriate education.

FW – it would be good to ask the DPI folks to what extent they are comfortable with things like the wrestling club example.

NBL – having heard this question from Julie, I checked with my district PE teachers – they consult with a TVI and/or O&M, who recognize the limitations of the student, then based on that feedback they design an APE program. Also spoke with some compliance people at DPI. I don't think they will come up with a short statement. Without an APE teacher, I think from a compliance section it could be a problem.

SG – I spoke with Eileen Hare, the PE consultant on the Content and Learning Team. There is no reason why an innovative program cannot be created for a student in collaboration with a licensed APE teacher.

FW – the keyword is supervisor – the curriculum should be developed with the APE teacher, but the day to day implementation can be with other staff.

NBL – address with DPI, Julie, please collect feedback from colleagues with similar issues.

JH – I will happily bring that up.

PD – We will invite a compliance DPI person to next Council meeting.

JH – we have discussed a Short Course in PE for High School Credit, which WCBVI offered several years ago. Is that a possibility again? It would be a great opportunity, especially for students in smaller districts. A summer opportunity would be great for many students as well.

## Summer Programming

STAR is causing some issues due to not knowing some budget items. And GPR budget is tight. So need to use Federal funds.

Held meetings yesterday with WCBVI staff to discuss the revamping of the WCBVI summer programs.

EmployAbility – unchanged, and federally funded.

Children's Program and Sensory Program – were too "recreational" in nature, so off the board for this year.

CCR/Transition Program for 12-21 – Transition focus allows us to use Federal funds.

Intermediate Literacy Program for 8+ - Literacy focus is in alignment with DPI RDA, so can use Federal funds.

Beginning Literacy Program for day students

Adult Summer Program – legislatively mandated, and must be GPR funded.

Alternate funding for future summer programs – looking at a way to use some bonds for establishing a foundation, which we hope to use to fund summer programming.

Sadiqua White-Harper – some questions regarding the programming – what are the limitations for disabilities for the students? Such as a wheelchair student.

SG – We have had several students who use wheelchairs, and with other disabilities. The physical disabilities are not a deterrent to them participating in the program. The brochure says that students who will benefit most from this program are those who will in the future will be seeking employment with little or no consistent support. The program is pretty fast-paced. We have had a student with a cognitive disability

participating as a pilot the last couple years, and found that even with additional support she couldn't physically or cognitively keep up with her peers and participate fully in the program.  
PD – but the CCR/Transition program may be right for the students SWH is asking about, with more support available.

Emergency Licensure for O&M –

JH – the response was interesting – there is a “silent rule” about it. If a licensure area does not say specifically that you CAN issue an emergency license, then it is not allowed. I hope that is correct that we are not allowing O&M emergency licenses. It is a serious liability issue for all involved. I feel strongly that O&M remain something that you must have completed your training program prior to licensure.

PD – tracking down the exact story in regards to this has been interesting. Emergency and Provisional licenses for O&M are not issued. The silent rule seems pretty clear.

JH – this comes up every few years. DPI hasn't wanted to discuss further than what they have written. It is very important for O&M instructors to be highly trained to ensure the safety of the students and provide proper instruction.

Collaborative Vision Conference in April

JH – today is the last day for early registration. This is shaping up to be a great conference.

MJ – forwarded flyer and registration information to the Council this morning.

Next Meeting is June 21. Linda would like to invite the Council to attend at TBLL and ABLE. Central Library at 8<sup>th</sup> and Wisconsin in Milwaukee.

Adjourn 1:00