

# State Superintendent's Blind and Visual Impairment Education Council

## AGENDA – Meeting #54

October 13, 2015

10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Resources for Libraries and Lifelong Learning

2109 S Stoughton Rd, Madison, WI

10:07 Call to order

Introductions

Cheryl Orgas on the phone

Kay Glodowski, WCBVI

Kay Rhode, WCBVI

Public input and comments

None sent ahead of time.

Schedule meetings

December 15, RLLL 10-2

March 1, RLLL 10-2

June 21, RLLL 10-2

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

Newsline Contract renewed

Ann Shae at front desk working with Newsline subscribers

CZ – signed up for Newsline this summer.

New version of Kurzweil 1000 has a superb voice. The annunciation is crisp and clean. Very good quality.

### WCBVI Outreach Updates

10:20—Stacy Grandt

*Update and discussion on the new IEP being piloted this year, and it's connection to college and career readiness programming:*

SG – Stacy report that she is on the committee at DPI that is looking at the updated IEPs.

Originally the new IEP was called Next Generation IEP, is now called College and Career Ready IEP. Jennifer Meyer is also on the committee. Jennifer is the point person for DPI committees from WESP-DHH Outreach Team. We are collaborating and giving feedback to the committee, as they continue to work on this project. There is also a procedural compliance group assessing the forms and creating new model IEP forms. Stacy is in the process of putting together a section of that that will be prompting the IEP team to look at accessible instructional materials, UDL, but specifically reading formats. (i.e. Would the

student benefit from receiving their materials in a specialized format – LP, BRI, Audio for example?...) Along with the IEP there will be modules to help provide guidance to teams. At this time, the committee developing the new IEP format is in agreement that a low incidence module will need to be created. A PST meeting on November 6 in Stevens Point, and one of the activities will be for the TVI/O&M to look at what is important to include. DPI has shared the draft IEP form with the Outreach Team and the WSBVI IEP Coordinator to provide feedback as well. Stacy reinforces that it is very encouraging, and helpful to be involved in the project from the start, so the students we serve can be included in the development thought process directly from the beginning of the project.

NBL – to what extent has WCBVI been involved in adapting the IEP, especially in relation to College and Career Readiness? How does this impact our kids in Janesville?

Stacy again emphasized that it is tremendously encouraging to have the concerns and issues related to students who are blind or visually impaired as part of the discussion during this pilot session of the new IEP. As we know it is key to have involvement in any project change from the start, so the students that we serve can be part of the planning process and on-going discussion so this IEP roll-out process has really been a positive and very helpful thing.

*Outreach Calendar* – Calendar distributed to council members, and Stacy also noted that it is also on the WCBVI website. Among the topics contained are: Four or five Transition Goal Setting Workshops will be held depending on the need that teachers in the state require to assist them best. There will also be Six Family Gatherings. This year presentations at Family Gatherings will focus on O&M, as we now have a new and highly skilled O&M Consultant, whose name is Kay Rhode. Family Gatherings will also present APH products that can be service to students and teachers in the state, and there will also be time for sharing thoughts, concerns and ideas for making the maximum positive impact on student learning and helping to strengthen family involvement in the process.

*The following discussion followed Stacy's presentation:*

NBL – congratulations to the center for seeing the value in family engagement. This is a really strong step in implementing. It is very forward-thinking, especially as the new IEP has family engagement highlighted. Nancy also suggested bringing the Family Gatherings to Daniel Parker's attention to use as a model when discussing this as a part of the new IEP.

SG – A lot of what we are doing now is electronic, which makes it hard to build relationships, so the gatherings really a positive and necessary assist in that capacity. Once they meet us it helps people connect a face to the department, and is a really nice opportunity to get to know the families. These Family Gatherings are amazing, and they truly get down to the foundation of what we're doing, which is connecting with people so we can be of greatest help to them.

*Short Course Classes: Throughout the year:* (Please see our online schedule for WCBVI Short Course Programming.)

*Outcome-Based Student activities* – across the state with particular outcomes, based on the ECC typically. "It's all downhill from here" service learning project at Lion's Camp – blankets for shelters, dog treats for Humane Societies, Salvation Army laundry soap.

Transition Goal Setting Workshops – Have done different things to try to have families access Dave Ballman's services. They have been successful, and we are trying something new once again this year to keep interest and participation in Transition Goal Setting for students growing

in the use, and utility to people. There will be four workshops for Transition Goal Setting and I'll keep you posted on how they go, and the response we receive.

This is a perfect segue into my next topic. As you know, Mary Tellefson, our O&M consultant in Outreach retired. I am happy to announce that we have had the marvelous good fortune to hire a professional who brings her own set of high-level skills to the job. Kay Rhode has been hired in the O&M Consultant position, and is collaborating with Mr. Ballmann on the Transition Goal Setting Workshops. (Stacy distributes fliers to council members. And introduces Kay and asks her to speak to the council about her work at WCBVI as O&M Consultant.)

Kay Rhode Introduced herself to council. and provided a brief background on her professional credentials which has prepared her for the job as O&M Consultant– Kay described her education and work, which she began as a Dance Therapist undergrad (kids and movement,) through her work as an O&M Instructor in the state. Kay outlined how she arrived at WCBVI as an O&M Instructor last year, and how her interest in becoming the Outreach O&M Consultant was immediate and very strong, given her background and experience in the field. Kay accepted the position as O&M Consultant this year, and worked during the six-week EmployAbility program with Dave Ballmann and the other professionals who make this great program happen, and it which was such a good experience, to see all the ECC areas come together! Moreover, Kay described how it laid the ground work for her increased interest in Transition Goal Setting and she is truly excited to be a part of the goal setting workshops.

NBL – How do the workshops coordinate or align with the 2017 academic and career planning?

PD – We are looking at this, and all of the projects are tied in with the Agenda 2017. As we have developed the program at WSBVI, we are looking directly at that document to provide guidance and help inform what we're doing as an educational institution. The Outreach Team is doing amazing things right now, and academic and career preparation for the students Outreach serves across the state are factoring into the program we're forwarding.

NBL – legislation of academic/career planning says that by 2017 that every student between the grades of 6-12 has access to the planning. The coordination between special educators and schools, and how to coordinate that with PTP. At leadership conference next week there will be a section on this as well.

SG – Suzan/Terry came to last PST meeting and presented on this. Marcy Dicker and myself working with the DPI Special Education team have really been told that we need to start looking through the lens of transition and literacy for the activities that we are planning.

NT – Kay, do families have to pay anything to attend?

KR – Absolutely not, our goal is to make this accessible as possible and so we do not require a fee to attend. It is a very promising program and we're working very hard to make it better each day we move ahead. It's a real pleasure being a part of it and I'm really looking forward to continuing to play an active role in helping WCBVI expand these incredibly important services.

Stacy Grandt – *UEB Transition Plan for Wisconsin*. One of the things discussed at APH last week was Math – as in, which code are we using. Originally the nationwide plan was to stay with Nemeth for Math. It came to our attention that in fact four states have decided they will be using UEB mathematics, which is a big change in the math code. Because we started on the road of continuing with Nemeth for Mathematics in Wisconsin, we intend to stay this course unless instructed to do otherwise. The states who are not, are working along the lines of “Whatever the IEP says is what we will provide” This creates a very difficult situation for

transcribers, tests makers, and others who have to create materials and also have to duplicate copies of materials. Wisconsin is among the majority of states who are using Nemeth for Math.

As you know, as of January 4, transcribers will not be producing materials in EAEB. Obviously adults who are accustomed to reading materials in the former code and transcribers who have been producing the former code will have a more difficult time becoming used to utilizing the UEB than students who are learning the UEB as they progress with their education. Younger students will only learn UEB as they enter the K-12 system and therefore these students will have the foundations for their learning presented in the UEB. Given we are making this shift obviously there will be a period of transition, which will likely take ten years for a full transition for the majority of braille readers to become fluent in the new code. Once again, all new materials will be UEB after January 4 and this shift in itself presents its own challenges as we make the transition to the UEB.

NBL – Is the Assessment team fully aware of this transition as they move forward?

SG – Yes, they are very aware of the situation and are working with test production companies that we work with to make this transition as smoothly as possible.

CO – Is there any way through a statement from WCBVI that could go out reminding everybody of the UEB transition, and that we are using Nemeth for math and science? It would be nice to have a public statement of what Wisconsin is doing with its overall plan.

PD – WCBVI has worked to make people aware of the transition is occurring and the timeline and we will continue to send out reminders of the transition to the UEB.

CZ – Obviously people end up spending a lot of time early on when you encounter something different. It is a change in your ability to move quickly through materials.

CO – More than the change in the contractions, the extra symbols throw one off, but it is easily enough taught. It is harder on teachers and transcribers, and writing rather than reading is more difficult.

CZ – Any statement from WCBVI won't reach all the people that need the information. The announcement/statement needs to be multi-pronged, to as many transcribing services as possible.

CO – WISBraille is meeting this weekend, and would be able to share as well. And Julie Sumwalt is doing a tremendous job in the state, and we are so fortunate to have such leadership at the Center level.

NT – Can you briefly explain what is the major change between the types of braille?

SG – Again, one of the main changes is related to contractions, and rules that are changing.

NT – So what is the push for this? Why is this change occurring?

SG – All English-speaking countries are providing information, and there were many different braille codes originally. Given the wide differences in the many codes, countries decided together to agree on a standardized code. It's interesting to note that The U.S. is the last country to make this change, and BANA picked the date for the U.S. transition process. Each state created their own implementation plan. As you can see, in the last four years there have been many changes in not only braille, but tactile graphics, etc. Collaborating and doing the training for transcribers and teachers is an immense process. For the past three years our braille transcriptionist, Julie Sumwalt has been spending the majority of her time with assisting people across our state and at the Center in Janesville successfully make this transition. Ms. Sumwalt has spent so much time on this project that her position changed so significantly that her position description was changed to that of an Education Program Specialist position, which focuses more on training and leadership as of November 1.

*Roles and Responsibilities Document* – Kay Glodowski had a workgroup to create this document. Has been up for providing feedback.

CZ – Impressed with the document.

SG – Thank you, a lot of work went into its creation and it is a document that can be used in having discussions with administrators. Not a required framework, but more of a guideline/suggestion for reference. Spells out what you might be able to expect a TVI and O&M to be doing.

NBL – Who was on the committee?

Kay Glodowski – It started off as a workgroup with Carol Schweitzer. Two groups, north and south, including administrators. It has been a project five years in the making. The group worked with TVI/O&M personnel working in the field who listed what they did on the job. From those lists, it was developed and created. It is really from the mouths of people in the field who are doing the work.

SG – There was a sub group of the larger committee to create the document. This committee reported back to the larger group. It has been approved by DPI, and can be found on the DPI site.

KG – New professionals will have access to this, and administrators. The document can be used as a start for conversations between vision professionals and administrators.

NBL – This should be a key component to the UWP TVI Program.

CZ – I agree, it gives perspective, perhaps for those looking to get into a TVI program, of what kinds of things you may be expected to do. It will be very helpful.

FW – Also, administratively there are a lot of directors who don't know what to do with this population. I'm sure they will greatly appreciate this guidance from the document to have an informed conversation with staff.

NBL – Special Education Directors need to be aware, not just on the website. An idea might to present it at the Special Education Leadership Conference, to bring it to the attention Special Education Directors.

SG – Actually you are very right! WCBVI will be presenting this document at the WCBVI table at the Special Education Conference.

FW – It is important this isn't a checklist, but more a variety of things that professionals should be thinking about.

SG – The appendix is very valuable in regards to assessments and Expanded Core Curriculum.

SL – That type of list would be overwhelming for new staff looking at it.

FW – Especially when we are getting emergency licensed staff. Make sure to work with them on what they really need to worry about, and developing the skills.

SL – It's becoming very hard to get teaching candidates in general. In the past many more people were considering a career in the field, and the number is down considerably.

NBL – Very good point, for example, five years ago we would get 20 for a cross-cat teacher, now I am lucky to get 3.

KG – There are teachers that are doing every single thing in this document.

CO – I am amazed at how great the team of TVIs in Wisconsin is. Strong, passionate, committed.

SG – *Mentoring Program*. On the teacher development and support front we are working towards a formal mentoring system in Wisconsin that will help provide great support for teachers in the field. This is important, especially when many staff are unlicensed and need to

do student evaluations. Right now, we are looking at Texas model of teacher mentorship to try to create a systematic and formal mentoring program through Outreach.

SG – In addition, we are working on updating the eligibility criteria document based on suggestion from the Council. The changes are very basic, and adding the Self-Advocacy as an ECC area is among the changes. All Special Education Team consultants will be looking at the eligibility criteria documents, and then working on a guidance document. There will hopefully be a template for all disability areas in the future.

NBL – Will there be changes in the administrative rule or checklist?

SG – Just format changes so they are more easily accessible. (Rule, then the plain language)

11:15 Adjourn for Lunch

11:45 WCBVI/DPI Updates

Pete Dally: I am pleased to report to the council that last year, WCBVI had its largest enrollment at since 2004-2005 –In fact the number of student enrolled last year stood at 63, and our graduating class was 12, which again was an impressive number. Given the large number of graduates, I am also pleased to report that this year we our enrollment stands at 55 students, and we continue to add students even this late in the year. To put enrollment in perspective, in 2011-2012 WCBVI enrollment stood at 42 students, and the increase in enrollment is very encouraging, but of course this discussion is not simply about enrollment data. From my perspective, we are on a very positive trajectory, and not by chance. In fact, in the past few years we have had the very good fortune to add a number of extremely talented professionals to our already very talented team of professionals at WCBVI. For instance, Jenny Stroh will be hired at the Outreach TVI for Short Course and her work is quickly proving to be of outstanding quality. Outreach continues to work hard throughout the state, and both the School and Outreach teams are continually looking at new ways to help make a difference in lives of the students, families, teachers and districts that we proudly serve, and make our instructional design as relevant as possible for today's students. In many ways, efforts to continuously improve WCBVI services for students, families, teachers and districts we serve are reshaping WCBVI to keep services current and relevant. Having said this, many of the things we have looked at for our continuous improvement effort are things that have been done in the past. History is a great teacher, and looking at past practices has helped to inform where we're going today. So it is great to be part of a team that is committed to helping others succeed in their life, work and future goals.

Our College and Career Readiness Program continues to expand and improve its ability to provide great instruction and support for upper level students. In addition, we have added subject area teachers who team with TVI for support and the result has been excellent academic instruction at the school, and we're improving each and every day. I'll use our Math and Science program as an example. Our Math Instructor, Mr. Tim Fahlberg, is providing excellent instruction, and is continuously looking for things to assist student in their mathematical understanding and skill development, for instance, Mr. Fahlberg is

utilizing QR codes to assist students in homework help. He is also working diligently to become fluent in Nemeth. To add to the strength of the math program, Tim is teaming with Sarah Elizabeth Baguhn, a fantastically talented TVI who herself is an outstanding mathematician and teacher, and she brings high level skills in the area of Nemeth. Ms. Baguhn was recently hired at the beginning of this current academic year, and she is quickly proving to be an excellent addition to the math department. Our development of the math program at WCBVI is a good example of the game-changing type of thing that is making our instructional design more relevant and more intensely focused as we move forward as a team.

NBL – This is so great to hear and right on the money. It is important to share this with the decision makers, and Special Education Directors so they can share this information with IEP teams. An idea might be to do a sectional at a CASS spring or winter conference, to talk about options available and the services provided. Especially with the TVI shortage.

PD – That's a great idea, and I want to point out that we are looking for ways to be of assistance to teachers in the field, and to share the skills and ideas that we're developing at WCBVI. Since we are a state-wide service, we see it as very important that we share ideas and solutions with our colleagues working across the state. In my view we may want to consider doing a form of webinar, or a series of webinars to help assist teachers and students across the state.

FW – It is important that the IEP team and administrators in local district talk about transition skills especially, since that is such a strength of having the students residing in Janesville. Really have to balance the skills and academic piece. All too often the skills part doesn't happen at home.

NBL – video/web would be very critical, especially in incidences of sudden skills changes, Short Courses, and speaking with parents regarding their hesitation.

Perhaps even a discussion on placement options (not exclusive to WCBVI) and emphasis on an alternate curriculum.

SL – It's also critical to have data to support qualification.

NBL – specialized curriculum in some of these alternate placements can be better rather than modifying an existing curriculum in regular setting.

CZ – What's also critical is a discussion of balancing academic and ECC curriculum. Especially the perception of the lack of academic focus at WSBVI.

NBL – What is the balance between academic students, and students with multiple disabilities at WCBVI (perhaps in relation to alternate assessment and not)

PD – Four years ago, roughly 75% of our students were students with multiple disabilities. At this time we have roughly 60% of students who have multiple disabilities with 40% being classified as academic. The bottom line is we value all of our students, and academic improvement efforts are aimed at all our students succeeding at their highest level.

NBL – Obviously the school is doing something the district cannot do. If you develop the kind of support for students that would allow them to excel in the regular curriculum as well as the alternate curriculum, that is something that districts need to know about the availability of the option. If it is framed that simply, I think it will click.

PD – I agree, and think we are at that point now.

NT – What has changed since you were at the school Chris?

CZ – For a number of years the school in Janesville was viewed as a dumping ground, but the view is changing

NBL – The increase of more inclusive education around the nation also effected people’s view of schools like the one in Janesville.

PD – I agree, but again I want to emphasize that we also are focused on serving the teachers in the field and the students they serve. One way I could see the math department assisting in the field, would be to provide distance math instruction for teachers.

CZ – That would be difficult since science and math demand a much more close interaction between student and teacher. History and English can be managed.

PD – I understand, and agree. Another idea might be look at distance webinars and the use of AT to communicate with those in the field. This past summer I took part in some course work with the UW-Platteville program – in the AT course, we were shown a device which sends braille over the internet – Even something like this might be one option in the not too distant future.

*Discussion on remote learning development.*

SL – When resources for staff are limited you have to get creative. Ideally face to face, but having options is great.

SG – There are several states doing tele instruction with success. We will be disadvantaged if we don’t explore this.

NBL – I agree, but we need to be sure that it isn’t approached as a one size fits all. IEP team criteria for determining if it is an appropriate option for each student.

CZ – In talking about elementary school program, is this idea of the team TVI approach, which gives you a really good platform to start looking at a team TVI approach associated with remote learning as well. Figuring out ways to better educate district TVIs in the team approach as well. Developing the team process and extending it through the telepresence.

PD – That could be built into the mentoring program, absolutely.

CO – We need to be creative and break down the stereotype around the students. It must happen and it can happen.

PD – I agree and that’s one of the factors in our efforts to really look at practical and helpful ways we can share with people in the state.

MAD – You have Dawn Soto, drives home the necessity of having someone who is able to get the daily work for the student, and the impact on the student’s education when they have access to high quality teachers.

PD – Discussion of Emergency Procedures – Given the times we live in, I also want to update you on the fact that we are examining our emergency procedures at the school and making changes in this as well. We take safety very seriously. Our facilities manager, principal and other key staff are working on the safety plan, and looking at ways to make it more thorough and better. I think it is important that the council knows that we are working in this important area, because it is incumbent upon us to do so, and it is something we are looking at very seriously.

Discussion on what other districts are doing in regards to safety and fire drills, especially in relation to students with disabilities.

UW-P TVI Program – First, I want to share with the council my thoughts on the incredible work that Silver Lake College has done throughout the years in running a top-notch

program which produced so many highly qualified TVIs working throughout the state of Wisconsin. In fact, I am absolutely convinced that the UW-Platteville program would never have been considered by the UW without the success of the Silver Lake Program over the past decade. I want to salute the marvelous work done by Sister Mary Karen and those who worked along side her in making Silver Lake the successful program it has truly been. Many thanks to Sister Mary Karen and Silver Lake staff for the outstanding work they have all done.

As for the UW-Platteville TVI program, a good example of the commitment shown by the University can be shown in the fact that The Department Chair of the school of Education at UW-Platteville herself took two of the courses offered this summer in the TVI program, which again I think shows their incredible commitment to this program.

To provide a little further backstory to the program I'd like to mention this to the council. When the state announced the significant cut to the UW system this spring, obviously we were concerned about how this might impact the TVI program's future, especially because our program hadn't yet started. Fortunately UW-Platteville again showed their commitment to the program, the caveat was that there was a program coordinator freeze throughout the UW system, Therefore I have been continuing to work with UW-P to assist in coordinating the program. Jennifer Collins has been assigned to the program (an assistant director). She has been absolutely wonderful and has worked with us through numerous bumps in the program. As far as enrollees, the program hosted five participants this past summer, and currently has three enrolled this fall. As is happens, the modest enrollee numbers have actually provided a good thing, so the administrative work necessary for creating and successfully administrating and maintaining this vital program can be done on a manageable level. We have continued to partner with UW-Platteville to a degree, which was not the original plan, but with the budget cut to the UW System at large, it is our pleasure and we see it as our duty to assist with coordination as much needed. I am extremely thrilled to see the program develop as it goes, and I am extremely optimistic that the program will continue to find success going forward. The course rotation has been revised for 2017. (Course rotation distributed to council members and discussion is held.)

*Discussion on loan forgiveness.* Timeline for applying for aid and what is covered, and some details of aid that will need to be worked out prior to the announcement so participants will know ahead of time what is required and expected. (Member of the council are provided with the loan agreement document from HEAB, and discussion is held.)

This program is needed and has to be successful, not just for our state, but for the nation. We will continue to announce the program statewide with updated details, and we will be sending word out through all of our channels, BVH weekly email, TVI listserve, UW-Platteville sources as well.

NBL – A good idea may be to do a sectional at CASS to announce the program.

PD – I agree, that would be great.

SG – We are going to have UW-P info at the SE Leadership Conference. And will try to share the loan info if we have the right information by then.

New state exam – Forward Exam. As you know, last year to help administer the Badger Exam WCBVI sent staff and the equipment into the field to help teachers administer the testing. At this point unsure of details of the Forward Exam, but WCBVI will be working with the assessment team once again this year during implementation as much as possible.

SG – I spoke with a member of the assessment team, and she although she did not have much information for us, I did let her know of the need for hard copy braille exams if required. This would be greatly appreciated by students and teachers across the state, and she said this would be made a priority.

1:21 Meeting Adjourned