

State Superintendent's Blind and Visual Impairment Education Advisory Council
AGENDA – Meeting #87
May 28, 2025– 10:00 am - 2:00 pm
TEAMS Virtual Meeting

10:00 Call to order at 10:07 am

[Council authority and function](#)

Council Members

Name	Council Role	Term ends	Attendance
Nettamara Doak	Certified Braille Transcriber	June 2027	X
Jennifer Raclaw	Parent	June 2025	Absent, emailed
Tiffany Meridith	Parent	June 2025	Absent
Penny Kurkiewicz	Parent	June 2025	PM only
Cheryl Orgas	Member of an organization	June 2025	Late X
Colleen Kickbush	Member of an organization	June 2027	X
Kailee Kamps	Member of an organization	June 2025	X
Jane Moran	Licensed Teacher	June 2027	X
Julie Hapeman	Licensed Teacher	June 2025	X
Laurie Schmidt	Special Ed Director	June 2027	X

Wendy Leising	CESA Representative	June 2025	X
Linda Bailey	Higher Ed	June 2025	Absent
Jennifer Ottowitz	Other - VI	June 2025	Absent, emailed
Guadalupe Torrijos	Other - VI	June 2026	X
Rachel Krogman	Other	June 2026	X

DPI Representatives

Name	DPI Role	Attendance
Paul Manriquez	Assistant State Superintendent, Division for Learning Support	Arrive 11-11:30 11:34 am X
Elizabeth Tomev	Assistant Director, Division for Libraries and Technology, Library Services Team	Absent
Beth Voecks	Library Services Manager, WI Talking Book & Braille Library	x
Patricia Williams	Director, Special Education DPI	Depart noon X
Dan Wenzel	Director, WCBVI	X needs to depart by 2
Dawn Soto	Outreach Director, WCBVI	X
Kay Rhode	Liaison to the Advisory Council, Education Consultant, WCBVI Outreach	X
April Peissig	Secretary to the Advisory Council, WCBVI Outreach Administrative Professional	X
Amanda Jordan	Administrative Assistant to the WCBVI Center Director	X

Daniel Parker	Assistant Director, Special Education DPI	Not attending
---------------	---	---------------

Guest: Jessie Grober WCBVI Outreach Education Consultant 11:30

10:05 Housekeeping & Attendance

Introductions, Exiting and New Members

Prior Meeting Minutes Approval

[February 17, 2025 SS BVI Ed Advisory Council Minutes.docx](#)

Motion to approve – Laurie Schmidt

Second – Jane M

Passed - Yes

10:20 Public Comment

[Public Appearances.pdf](#)

[Special Education Acronym Glossary](#) Can be found in Orientation power point

<https://dpi.wi.gov/sped/supports-educating-students->

[ieps#msdyntrid=f4QYsww91AyZeEWifCooc1TpbQP9y7mR2tAKSxExuPk](https://dpi.wi.gov/sped/supports-educating-students-ieps#msdyntrid=f4QYsww91AyZeEWifCooc1TpbQP9y7mR2tAKSxExuPk)

WCBVI Outreach consultants have been meeting with itinerant coordinator staff led by, Teri Phalin. We have been sharing important information from this council and other resources. Excited about this connection.

10:30

Follow up on Action items

Centralized webpage place for Professional Learning resources [Special Education Professional Learning Resources | Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction](#)

VI Para subcommittee reconvened. Met April 30 with Small IEP Workgroup, led by Daniel Parker, assist spec ed director, for input. Will meet again in fall with some consultants to address paraprofessional special skill sets. Met with Iris Jacobsen who is Intellectual Disabilities Consultant and oversees para page. Iris helped me understand the difference between special Education aide and Title 1 paraprofessionals. We are talking about SE aides who have a license (requirements are 18 years old, pass background check and have a job offer). Title 1 paras do not have a license but there are special requirements for them to work in a Title 1 school.

Met May 6 with Wendy, Paul, Nettamara, Kay drafting messaging for DLS, New Special Education Directors Academy, Other groups? After branding will post

[Example of District Recommended Duties and Responsibilities for VI Paraprofessionals.pdf](#) on <https://dpi.wi.gov/sped/program/vision> and

<https://dpi.wi.gov/sped/educators/initiatives/paraprofessionals>

The next document in the recommendation [VI Paraprofessional Knowledge & Skills PDF \(1\).pdf](#) has many deadlinks and the Training guide is outdated. <https://www.nationalbraille.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Basics-101-for-Paraprofessionals.pdf>

Subcommittee with the support of Outreach WCBVI consultants will look for training resources to recommend to LEAs for VI paras.

Do we revise [10.05 Special Education paraprofessionals guidance document](#)

No, this is more for licensing and general use.

[BVI Education Advisory Council VI Paraprofessionals Recommendation 5-2024.docx](#)

Paraprofessional Summit hosted by CESA 7!

This in person, two-day event is a general paraprofessional training

More information is in registration

[Click here to register](#)

Oshkosh Correctional Institute. Dawn, Kay, Lisa Hoard, Accessible Educational Materials (AEM) Data Specialist, who presented on the Glen Stacey Grant met with Ken Giddings the Braille Program Coordinator to share more with him about what WCBVI does and how we can support him through our Braille Specialist and Outreach Service Requests.

Dawn, Patti, Rick Cruz, Fiscal Grants manager met February 18. Communication is going into the DLS, Outreach Weekly, WAER digital. **High Costs of Educating Students who are Blind and Visually Impaired**

A question arose from a member of the Blind and Visual Impairment Education Advisory Council as to how are Local Education Agencies (LEAs) educated about the high costs of adaptive equipment, such as the Monarch and braille textbooks, which can cost \$20,000 or more, and we wanted to make sure that LEAs are aware that these costs may be covered under the High Cost Special Education Aid (HSCE) program. In fact, many districts seek HSCE for high costs related to providing a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for students in Wisconsin who are blind and visually impaired (examples include high cost braille textbooks, high cost dynamic tactile and multiline braille devices, paraprofessionals who are trained as certified braille transcribers, etc...). More about HCSE:

- [High Cost Special Education Aid \(HCSE\)](#) is additional support for school districts and other eligible LEAs serving students with disabilities that are significant and costly.

- Agencies apply for partial reimbursement of the costs for individual students in the previous fiscal year.
- High-Cost Special Education Aid is a sum-certain appropriation in the state's biennial budget.
- Fiscal reporting of eligible FY2024-25 high-cost special education data will begin on December 15, 2025 and close on February 23, 2026.

11:00

Subcommittee Updates and Discussion

1. Braille Framework Subcommittee [Braille Framework Council Update May 2025.dot](#)
JG/CO/JO

KR – acknowledges CO JO TVIs in field

2. O&M shortages subcommittee JH

NIU wanted 8 people needed to get O&M in WI program going

Working to get 6; Stacy Kelly, program coordinator, trying to get NIU to allow start if we have only 5. Currently have 5 trying

No federal grant for certification programing.

Another message to WAER from Julie, sent today: *possible alternative for participation in the Wisconsin O&M Certification program. If you (or someone you know) have a bachelor's degree but are not in one of the blindness professions and are interested in becoming an O&M Specialist, you MAY be able to start your coursework up here in Wisconsin and complete the rest at NIU down the road. Please contact Stacy Kelly this week as we are under a deadline to meet the minimum number for the class to be a go – but we are getting close.*

11:30-12:00 Council Representative Updates

Vision Forward

[WAER Updates 5.28.25.docx](#)

National Federation of Blind WI: NFB national Convention, July 8 through 13, in New Orleans, in-person or virtual registration, check [nfb.org](#)

NFB sending Advocacy letters on several topics (ex. Social Security Office access)

10 students sent to braille games from WCBVI. Great experience.

Working on new books to give away

Wisconsin Parents of Blind Children: East Troy Train Experience, Saturday, August 23, register with Debi Meng debi_meng@yahoo.com

Lions Camp weekend, October 10 through 12, register with Debi Meng
debi_meng@yahoo.com

Amy Lehman, Christina Martin are new board members

Vision Forward

1. School-Age Enrichment Events—Please let us know if you have ideas for additional programming to meet the needs of your students and their families. Some upcoming events include:
 - a. Rainbow Day Camp ages 5-14, July 28-31
 - b. Milwaukee Milkmen Baseball Game, All Welcome, Aug. 2
 - c. Tech Camp ages 14-21, Aug. 12-13
2. Children's Program Reimagining—Family Handbook coming soon with additional information...
 - a. Early Intervention—TVIs and O&Ms participate in home visits through a Birth to 3 Program partnership and are trained in administering and training others on the NAVeG <https://anchorcenter.org/naveg/>, which is an evidence-based vision screening tool for infants (0-12 months) at risk of having neurological visual impairments.
 - b. Early Education—small educational playgroups incorporating the ECC for ages 0-6 who are blind/vi, group sizes are typically 4-6 or 6-8 children grouped based on their developmental level and child/family goals. Focus is ECC, cognitive/play skills, social interaction, independence/self-help skills, and family engagement.
 - c. Neurological and Visual Impairments (NAVI) Program—educates and empowers individuals impacted by vision loss and neurological disorders throughout their lifespan (0-100+) by providing multi-disciplinary (medical and educational) services, so they can become as independent as they want to be in their home and community. Based on the individual's needs, a team may be comprised of two or more professionals including the following: optometrist, Teacher of the Visually Impaired, O&M Specialist, PT, OT, SLP, social worker, OTR/CLVT, CATIS, etc.

Will post in WAER digital.

Share w B3 and the DHS/DPI group. Dawn meets regularly with this group.

CESAs

WL will send a message to Itinerant Coordinator about Naveg to add to agenda

Not in WI Nicu units, yet. Children will be referred to Vision Forward to come into center for screenings will be working with pediatric ophthalmologist to refer to Vision forward

11:23-11:2 am break

Other updates:

JH put in for Glen Stacey funding for Chicago O&M trip for public transportation

They take Amtrak and subway this time thunderstorms and lighting

Left Chinatown good time was had took the L and water taxi

Called ahead tickets were almost sold out, some took the metro from Kenosha, exciting how O&M specialist regrouped only one teacher and one student couldn't go

JH last year in MILW public schools retiring, Chicago trip will go on

KR & JH shout out to Lisa H who heads Glen Stacey

JM amazing experience for the kids to go on Chicago Trip

15-minute break

12:15-1:00

DPI representative updates

1. WI Talking Book & Braille Library

Beth Voecks, Library Services Manager

Beth on WUWM Radio March 28, 2025

[BVI Council WTBBL Updates May 28 2025.docx](#)

2.Division for Libraries and Technology

Elizabeth Tomev, Assistant Director, DPI Library Services Team

[BVI Council Library Services Report DPI 5.28.25.pdf](#)

3. Wisconsin Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired Departmental Updates:

Dan Wenzel, Center Director [WCBVI Update Education and Residential 5-28-2025.docx](#)

Summer Programs: Make a Difference Program and We are Makers Program

Dawn Soto, Outreach Director [WCBVI Update Outreach 5-28-25.docx](#)

4. Department of Public Instruction (DPI) Updates Patti Williams, Director, Special Education DPI

[BVI Council May 2025 Updates .docx](#)

1:00

Recruitment (JR)

We will continue recruitment efforts through these channels: Division of Learning Support newsletter, the WAER digital community and the WCBVI Outreach Weekly update and, of course, word of mouth! Please reach out to your groups, including social media! Recruitment will be posted on WCBVI's Facebook page. As you learned in the orientation, the Wisconsin CENTER for the Blind and Visually Impaired is under the umbrella of the Department of Instruction and will be the homebase for the recruitment efforts. Follow WCBVI Facebook page and share from there! Keep in mind, we want and need to have equitable representation of racial and ethnic diversity within our state.

Reminder: Nominations, including new appointees, reappointments, and replacements mid-year, all go through the same nomination process.

Action Items (JR)

Kay and VI para subcommittee and WCBVI consultants work on Documents

Colleen: connect with Dawn Soto on Naveg and DHS/DPI collaboration

Jessie: Braille Framework waiting on approval from DPI admin to brand and publish

Reminders (JH)

1. Attendance. Statutes require two meetings. Please make your best effort to attend all meetings. We have 17 seats and quorum is thus, 9. We planned meetings in advance to reduce absenteeism.

2025-2026 Meeting Dates October 22, February 11th, May 20th. CO has events day after these 2 of these dates

Communication

Share what you learn here with your groups! Minutes from this meeting need to be approved at the next meeting before they are posted so it's important that you relay what you learned earlier!

This Council uses the TEAMS platform. Please accept TEAMS invitation and share the website with those who might want to attend. [State Superintendent's Blind and Visual Impairment Education Advisory Council](#)

Use council email! bvi.advisorycouncil@wcbvi.k12.wi.us

Please send category and DPI updates and any informational documents, two weeks before the meeting, and they will be added to the minutes. Please make your updates and any other documents accessible. If you can't send them ahead of time, consider sending documents after the meeting so that information is shared equitably.

3. Public comment

PM appreciation to Wendy

Motion to adjourn Cheryl Orgas

2nd Wendy Leising

Approved adjourned at 12:35 PM