

Wisconsin State Superintendent's Blind and Visual Impairment Education Advisory Council

AGENDA – Meeting #90

May 13, 2026– 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

TEAMS Virtual Meeting

10:00 Call to order

[Council authority and function](#)

Council Members

Name	Council Role	Term ends	Attendance (present/absent)
Nettamara Doak	Certified Braille Transcriber	June 2027	present
Rachel Krogman	Parent	June 2026- renominating	absent
Katie Bakke	Parent	June 2028	present
Kimberly Brown-Ubersox	Parent	June 2028	present
Cheryl Orgas	Member of an organization	June 2028	absent
Colleen Kickbush	Member of an organization	June 2027	absent
Kailee Kamps	Member of an organization	June 2028	absent
Shannon Sheffer	Licensed TVI	June 2027	present
Jenn Raclaw	Licensed O&M	June 2028	present

Penny Kurkiewicz	Licensed Gen Ed	June 2028	present
Barbara Wuensch	School Board Member	June 2028	absent
Holly Smith	School District Administrator	June 2028	present
Laurie Schmidt	School District Special Ed Director	June 2027	present
Teri Phalin	CESA Representative	June 2028	absent
Julie Hapeman	Higher Ed	June 2028	present
Jennifer Ottowitz	Other - VI	June 2028	absent
Guadalupe Torrijos	Other - VI	June 2026-exiting	present
Lealisa Stefl	Other	June 2028	present

DPI Representatives

Name	DPI Role	Attendance
Paul Manriquez	Assistant State Superintendent, Division for Access and Opportunity	present
Susan Piazza	Director of WI Educational Services Programs, DAO	present
Daniel Parker	Section Manager of Student Engagement, Bureau of Teaching and Learning, Division of Academics	present
Elizabeth Tomev	Director of Library Development, Bureau of Libraries, Division of School and Library Operations	present

Beth Voecks	Library Services Manager, WI Talking Book & Braille Library	present
Dan Wenzel	Director, WCBVI	present
Dawn Soto	Outreach Director, WCBVI	present
Kay Rhode	Liaison to the Advisory Council, Education Consultant, WCBVI Outreach	present
Meghan Fredel	Education Consultant	present
April Peissig	Secretary to the Advisory Council, WCBVI Outreach Administrative Professional	present
Amanda Jordan	Administrative Assistant to the WCBVI Center Director	present

10:05 Housekeeping & Attendance

Introductions

Terms ending: Rachel Krogman renominating, Guadalupe Torrijos exiting, Jane Moran exited in June and was representing the licensed TVI category.

Prior Meeting Minutes Approval [February 4, 2026 SS BVI Ed Advisory Council Minutes.docx](#)

Motion to approve – Jenn Raclaw

Second – Laurie Schmidt

Passed - yes

10:30 Public Comment

[Public Appearances.pdf](#)

[Public Comment, Erin Hansen, CESA 4.docx](#) Paul Manriquez

PM update will pass comment to ex committee will share more to Kay after PM hears back from ex committee in addition what action steps if any there are JH looks forward to hearing back from Paul and recommendations

[Special Education Acronym Glossary](#) Can be found in Orientation power point WCBVI Outreach Consultants regularly meet with Regional Special Education Network (RSN) representatives in communications **pertaining to professional development and other important Blindness Education information.** The purpose of RSN is to support

Wisconsin local educational agencies (LEAs) in advancing educational equity for students with disabilities.

<https://dpi.wi.gov/sped/educators/initiatives/regional-special-education-network>

10:45 Dawn Soto AEM [WCBVI AEM Academy of Special Education and Pupil Services Directors March 4, 2026](#)

Timestamp 101-140

[AEM Spec Ed/Pupil Services Leadership Academy](#)

5 min break

11:30 Follow up on Action items

[Dates for 2026-27 Council Meetings! KR](#)

Propose October 14, January 20 (MLK Day that week) (preferred by WCBVI) or (President's Day that week) February 17, May 12

Send Save the Dates

Avoids Leadership Academy and dates mentioned by JO, CO and avoids Collaborative Vision Conference.

[Northern Illinois University JH](#)

Higher Ed: The Wisconsin/NIU O&M Cohort is completing its 2nd semester. Students planned and participated in an all-day lesson to Chicago on April 25. The cohort will have one class in the summer -- O&M for Learners with Additional Disabilities -- and then students will start doing internships.

The Wisconsin/NIU partnership to bring a TVI program to Wisconsin received a lot of interest initially, and we are hoping to get the minimum number of students to start the program (11). A big push by everyone is needed to get to that number.

WAER now has flyers for the 3 adjacent state TVI and O&M programs if people are interested in learning more about any of those programs.

11:45-noon Subcommittee Updates and Discussion

Braille Needs Subcommittee.

Part of my responsibility as the DPI Liaison to the State Superintendent's Blind and Visually Impaired Education Advisory Council is to keep track of the goals of each subcommittee. When the goals have been accomplished, the subcommittee's work ends.

I have seen this through with multiple subcommittees and am excited to share that the goals of the Braille Needs subcommittee have been accomplished. The subcommittee asked if I would summarize the work, since the co-chairs, Cheryl Orgas and Jennifer Ottowitz could not attend today. First, a big thanks to Cheryl and Jennifer for driving this subcommittee. The subcommittee started meeting in April, 2023, meeting 16x along with doing some homework:)

The core group has been TVIs Kristin Grender, CESA 2, Melissa Gordon-Kowsky, West Bend, Robin Ekstrom, Hudson. DPI employees from WCBVI Outreach were Julie Sumwalt, braille specialist, Jessie Grober, TVI and Ed consultant and Dawn Soto, director Victoria Atkinson, curriculum coordinator from WSBVI and Bianca Williams-Griffin, DPI Office of Literacy Division. Council members, Lisa Stefl, Holly Smith, and Nettamara Doak joined this year.

Has the subcommittee fulfilled its goals? [Committees, Sub-Committees, & Workgroups.docx](#)

- a. Evaluate other states' standards in braille for English Language to give WI TVIs guidelines/standards
 - i. DONE. The *Considerations for Students Who Use or are Learning to Use Braille* can be found as Appendix 6 in the Wisconsin English Language Arts Standards. [Braille Considerations for ELA](#) Appendix 6, Page 132
- b. Evaluate WI Math standards and decide what is missing for braille users
 - i. There is a Statewide math plan in development at DPI and Dawn Soto is part of that work.
- c. DS Make recommendations for the Learning Media Assessment-for members of the council who might not know about LMA, I'll give a little overview. A Learning Media Assessment is part of a comprehensive evaluation for students who are blind and visually impaired. It is a structured evaluation conducted by a TVI and is used to determine the most appropriate ways a blind and visually impaired student accesses literacy and functional learning materials. It is typically conducted alongside the Functional Vision Evaluation (FVE) and Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) assessments. The LMA addresses literacy media (such as braille, print, tactile, audio, digital, etc...), sensory learning channels used to gain access to information and equitable access to the general curriculum by addressing disability related needs. It should be utilized for non-readers or pre-readers as well as with students who are currently readers. WCBVI can help w LMA through Outreach Service Request (OSR). If a resource or tool is not in the professional collection, it will be added for loan or consultations.
 - i. DONE - Preconference training on LMA, CVC 2026 with Jennifer Brooks the regional rep from APH as well as a session on Friday

- ii. DONE - LMA is included in updated Roles and Responsibilities of TVIs and OMs. [Roles and Responsibilities of Teachers of the Blind and Visually Impaired and Orientation and Mobility Specialists Final 09 2025.docx](#) and this document has been noted at our annual conference and shared widely
- d. KR Create a list of barriers for students getting braille into their hands at the same time as peers. The subcommittee started this by sending a survey to statewide TVIs, OMs, braille transcribers, paraprofessionals. [Summary of Responses to Barriers Survey.docx](#) Two of the main comments were about receiving braille and other alternate materials in a timely manner and educating everyone about how to do this, which means understanding the processes.
 - i. Dawn Soto presents at the annual Special Education/Pupil Services Leadership Virtual Academy on AEM, which she just shared with us today. She continually adjusts the presentation when LEAs and TVIs share feedback, through programs such as the Fall PST, Mentor and Protege meetings, the BVI Advisory subcommittees, and our statewide surveys. Thus, APH Louis database and procurement was explicitly taught at the May 1, 2026 WAER CVC session on AEM Dawn Soto presented.
 - ii. A parent/admin joined a meeting and requested that a One pager be created for onboarding staff who are new to working with students who use braille. Dawn compiled information on what is legally required and Jennifer Ottowitz turned it into a plain language document. At the last meeting
 - iii. Two more suggestions that were made, from looking at the results of the barriers to braille survey.
 - 1. Educate people about Statewide databases of large print and braille books that can be shared with professionals.
 - a. DS and WCBVI accessible educational media (AEM) center – textbook research, LEA presentations, WAER CVC Presentation on APH Louis database (NIMAC, all Accessible Media Producers AMPs, etc...)
 - b. The cochairs, Dawn and I met with WTBBL to review how we promote their services.
 - i. WTBBL will be at the WCBVI College Resource Fair, were at the CVC, will be at the PST in Oct, planning for a webinar as part of the Professional Mentor series
 - 2. There is a need for guidance and resources for private schools, including the LEA or private school responsibility under the law: Messaging about private school accounts for

APH Federal Quota is sent to private school leaders annually. We will utilize APH Fed Quota funds for textbooks for any students who are formally registered, if created by APH and if current funding allows. Otherwise, all LEAs and private schools must provide what is needed for their students.

With the close of this subcommittee, we want to say that, of course, Council members can always bring new concerns to the council, which generates new subcommittees. This is why members' perspectives are so valuable!

Newer council members might not know that each year, I write an Annual Report that is sent to the OSS. Work of subcommittees, notes from our reps and DPI members are added to this report. I follow the fiscal year, ending June 30, when WCBVI completes its enrollment and other data. This report will be ready for the first meeting of next year.

Former Assistive Tech Subcommittee discussed an idea for students to share success stories. Dawn [NCADEMI Student Accessibility Stories Video Project](#) Is your district improving how digital materials and tools work with assistive technology (AT)? We're looking for real stories that show what's working for students with disabilities. NCADEMI is inviting school districts to participate in a new video series, *Student Accessibility Stories*. These short videos will highlight how students use accessible digital materials and AT to learn, engage, and make progress in the general education curriculum. Participating districts will receive a professionally produced video they can use locally, while contributing to a national effort to highlight effective practices. Look for this next year. Email a brief description to ncademi@usu.edu or call us at (435) 554-8213

The Braille Needs Subcommittee makes a recommendation that WCBVI Outreach Education Consultants form a workgroup inviting community partners of TVIs, transcribers, paraprofessionals, adult braille users, accessible media producers to support administrators, curriculum directors, principals, teachers and teachers of blind and visually impaired, by creating document(s) for when a student who uses braille is new to their school. The workgroup would use the information just mentioned and create a plain language resource, one-pager front and back one pager with the Working title: You've got a braille reader, now what?

Motion Julie H

2nd Jen R (thinks it's a great idea and appreciation for all the work that has gone into this)

Approved yes

Per PM a reminder that this one-pager would need to run through all of the necessary internal DPI approval steps.

Former Assistive Tech Subcommittee discussed an idea for students to share success stories.. DS [NCADEMI Student Accessibility Stories Video Project](#) Is your district improving how digital materials and tools work with assistive technology (AT)? We're looking for real stories that show what's working for students with disabilities. NCADEMI is inviting school districts to participate in a new video series, *Student Accessibility Stories*. These short videos will highlight how students use accessible digital materials and AT to learn, engage, and make progress in the general education curriculum. Participating districts will receive a professionally produced video they can use locally, while contributing to a national effort to highlight effective practices. Look for this next year. ncademi@usu.edu or call us at (435) 554-8213

Noon-12:15 BREAK

12:15-12:30 Council Representative Updates

Category 3, licensed TVI, Shannon Sheffer

Possible opportunity for different reps from CESAS and School Districts to give updates on what they are doing with their students to bring awareness to everyone.

PM people come to council and share? Newsletters?

SS not needed at council possible in a newsletter or a separate meeting group

DS PST meeting could be a place to discuss

PM PAC Meetings? SP ED team and newsletter is a possibility. Need to figure out target audience and then way to share

KB great to always hear what others are doing, sharing with families would be good to share so they can share with school teams

[WAER Advisory Council Update 5.13.26.docx](#)

JH CVC was a week and half ago. Will be chair at next conference.

National Federation of the Blind WI

The National Federation of the Blind Convention is from July 3 to July 8, 2026, in Austin Texas. The Wisconsin Parents of Blind Children is again having the Lion's Camp weekend for Parents and blind children October 9 through October 11, 2026.

Vision Forward Events – no update

12:30-1:30 DPI representative updates

1. Director of Library Development, Bureau of Libraries, Division of School and Library Operations, Beth Tomev [BVI DPI Bureau of Libraries Update 5.7.26.docx](#)
2. WI Talking Book & Braille Library, Library Services Manager, WI Talking Book & Braille Library, Beth Voecks [BVI Council May 2026 WTBBL Updates.docx](#)
3. Wisconsin Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired Departmental Updates:

Center Director, Dan Wenzel [WCBVI Update Education and Residential 050626rev \(1\).docx](#)

Outreach Director, Dawn Soto and Meghan Fredel, Education Consultant

[WCBVI Update Outreach.docx](#)

<https://wcbvi.k12.wi.us/news/family-event-at-bookworm-gardens/>

4. Department of Public Instruction (DPI) IDEA updates and DPI resources for students with disabilities. Section Manager of Student Engagement, Bureau of Teaching and Learning, Division of Academics, Daniel Parker

PM Gov Evers additional support for public schools, passed joint finance committee
5/12 42% 26-27 50% 27-28 increase in special ed funding

1:30 Action Items Jenn Raclaw

Kay, chairs, and Dawn meet with Shannon to learn more about the idea for regional updates.

Paul talk with Jeremy B?

Kay will send dates for next year

WCBVI Outreach Education Consultants will form a workgroup.

Inviting community partners of TVIs, transcribers, paraprofessionals, adult braille users, accessible media producers to support administrators, curriculum directors, principals, teachers and teachers of blind and visually impaired, by creating document(s) for when a student who uses braille is new to their school. The workgroup would use the information just mentioned and create a plain language resource, one-pager front and back one pager with the Working title: You've got a braille reader, now what?

Recruitment

We have one open category, “other”. From statutes: Three other members, at least one of whom is visually impaired. Our recruitment efforts are through these channels: Special Education and Pupil Services 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 the racial and ethnic diversity within our state.

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

Reminders Julie Hapeman

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.

2026-2027 October 7, February 17, May 12

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 learn 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.

Public comment, as needed

Motion to adjourn Nettamra D

2nd Jenn R

Passed yes