

State Superintendent's Blind and Visual Impairment Education Council

AGENDA – Meeting #59

May 1, 2017

10:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Milwaukee Public Library Central Branch, Meeting Room 1

814 W. Wisconsin Ave, Milwaukee, WI

10:07 am

Call to order

Present: Nissan Bar-Lev, Kedibonye Carpenter, Cheryl Orgas, Nancy Thompson, Sadiqua White-Harper, Chris Zenchenko,

DPI Representatives Present: Pete Dally, Linda Vincent, Barb Van Haren, Amanda Jordan, Kay Rhode

Via phone: Julie Hapeman, Stephanie Klas, Martha Berninger

10:10 am

Library Updates

- Paula Kiely, Director, Milwaukee Public Library System

Welcome to the library and the city. Have chatted with Linda and Cheryl about the work they do and the work the rest of the Council members do, which is very much in line with the work that Milwaukee Public Library does. Very proud to be the administrator for the Talking Book and Braille program. Many users are in Southeast WI, but also throughout the entire state. There are increasing numbers of individuals who can benefit from alternate formats.

Nissan Bar Lev – in the past we have talked about an initiative taking place around the country – Universal Design for Learning (UDL) – Textbooks present a barrier to learning. Looking at options for accessing this information to remove that barrier. Hoping that the work that MPL has done can continue to cement the UDL requirements with publishers. Additional access for students to learning.

- Linda Vincent, Management Librarian, Wisconsin Talking Book and Braille Library (Stepping out for interviews, and will update us when she returns).

1:00 – TBBL participated in braille games.

National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped consultant visit (every other year) to audit. Report is not back yet, but it went well. 2016 – up approximately 1% for circulation, which is good in comparison to other TBBL in the country. TBBL sends out about 1,300 items a day. About 7,000 patrons. Will send fact sheet to Mandy. New Library Reference Assistant shortly. Chris Zenchenko – ambassador program? LV – not active, but Outreach Librarian does the majority of the outreach through Social workers, caregivers, MS, Arthritis. Working with ADRCs.

1:03 – Cheryl Orgas – Braille Games – started 15 years ago at Vision Forward. ABLE and WTBBL partner to host. ABLE does a book every year for students (paid for by Glen Stacey grant funds) held at Milwaukee Public Museum – working with them to make exhibits accessible. Three exhibits Friday (Butterfly – the book is representative of the metamorphosis – Dinosaur Exhibit – Rainforest Exhibit) Industries for the Blind and Beyond Vision also assist. Sadiqua White Harper – it was awesome. CO - Look to expand to Zoo, Urban Ecology Center in the future. CZ – look at Domes as well, in the past they were great collaborators.

Discussion regarding lower attendance at the games – perhaps do it outside of the testing window.

- 10:40 - Martha Farley Berninger, Director, DPI Resources for Libraries and Lifelong Learning Working with Linda and TBBL – department has put a lot of effort into accessibility for websites. Monseto – Kara Ripley working with DPI and TBBL to make sure that the pages are accessible. Always open to any feedback or recommendations the Council may have in relation to accessibility. CZ – Peoplesoft issues, mandatory modules. Working on accessibility issues, and hopefully within the next couple of months access will be improved.

An open position – school library media consultant – working very hard to fill that position (open since January) reposted a second time. Interview this month, and hope to have someone in the role in June.

The current BadgerLink databases will be renewed for another year. Procurement complications. With the exception of a computer skills training module piece.

10:45 am

DPI Updates

- Barb Van Haren, Director, DPI Special Education Team
Federal and state level items that may be of interest. Andrew F case (Supreme court case) – a student with autism, parents pursued action against the Douglas Cty school system in Colorado because Andrew was not making sufficient progress. One significant piece was that his IEP goals were carried over year after year without progress. An IEP written where the child can receive some benefit “de minimus” was rejected and told to have “appropriately ambitious” goals. BVH – working very hard at the department in regards to college and career ready IEPs for all students 3-21. Focusing on high expectations for students with IEPs and increasing student results. Goals written in an ambitious and achievable manner, and if the child is not reaching those goals, the team reconvene to discuss why. This focus aligns nicely with this case as well as FAPE guidance from the Federal level. Raising that bar, focusing on high expectations and results, and students having access to the same rigor and standard.

Watching government funding issue in regards to government shutdown. IDEA will likely be frozen, but no decrease, and perhaps a slight increase for students 3-21. WI submits their requests May 12. Looking at governor’s budget right now. Categorical aids request was not put in the proposed budget. A new bill SB 211 is asking for an increase from 26% to 33%. Larson introduced. NBL – 20 years ago it was 70%. Nancy Thompason – how did the decrease happen? NBL – combination of things. One part is the growth of Special Education. Percentage was formerly in the statutes but was removed because unobtainable, so now is whatever is available. NBL – mental health money? BVH – focusing on training and screening and new School Social Workers. Also a grant opportunity for transition services, remains in budget currently. Law that precludes districts from participating in job experiences that provide sub minimum wage. Looking at using the grant to assist in that transition.

Number of students in Wisconsin with IEPs – Departmental data collection software is new. WISE Dash and WISE Data. October 1 count – 119,336 students with IEPs. That is slightly down from the previous year (~1,500). Slight decreases over that last few years in total numbers. Correlates with decrease in student numbers. 13% of overall students

approximately.

Dr. Tony Evers continues in his role as State Superintendent. Work focusing on equity. Working hard at training among our staff in regards to equity issues. In regards to students of colors, ELL and students with IEPs.

Manka Mitchell – new compliance consultant. Rita Fuller – Family Engagement Consultant (parent and SE teacher from Beloit) working closely with WISPE and FACETS, and chairing the SS SE Advisory Council. Jessica Nichols – support students with autism or EBD along with mental health and trauma needs. Soon to hire disproportionality consultant. Outreach directors for both schools.

- *11:00* Peter Dally, Director, Wisconsin Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired NC's Tournament for Swim/Forensics – won first place in forensics for the 4th out of the last 5 years. An incredible triumph. Swimming came in 3rd. Twelve swimmers on team. Cannot overstate the importance of the Extra Curricular programs, especially at the school. These programs have a huge impact on our students, especially in their confidence. SWH – If Outreach could do a Short Course so high school kids in districts could earn PE credits in courses that actually benefit them, it would be amazing, so they can actually be involved. PD – Will keep looking into it. Kay Rhode – Karly Weaver is the new Short Course TVI, and is looking at similar opportunities, so we will be sure to loop her into the discussion.

Enrollment – last five years have gone up each year. Last year the high mark was 63, this year so far at 62. Not there just for numbers. Great instructional personnel and staff. College and Career Readiness program is going really well, with Tony King and Becky Heimerl instructing. Making a huge difference for so many students to have access to the local colleges while having support and the ECC skills.

New hires – Karly Weaver – Outreach TVI – very motivated. Carolyn Conroy – ID teacher, was one of our student teachers. Many dorm staff – Tanishia Davis, Kelley Oakey. So much learning goes on in the dorm, underscores the importance of hiring good people. Karla Parrish and Christine France – RNs.

Yerkes/University of Chicago partnership – Astronomy day last week – Dr. Wanda Diaz Merced, Dr. Nick Bonne (both of whom are blind astronomers), and Dr. Al Harper. All day event with hands-on activities as well as presentations. Believe our math and science program has been preparing the students to receive this kind of information. Another facet of this partnerships is EPIQ event this summer. Hosting on campus, around 60 teachers coming for this program.

Collaborative Vision Conference last week in Steven's Point. NFB conference as well recently.

Outreach Director – Stacy Grandt has retired. Position will be posted this week. Stacy was with us for 16 years. We will really miss her. She has put together information to set the next director up for success. Kay is assisting us during the interim, along with the outreach team. Late July is the hopeful start date.

- *168th year of operation*

- NBL – in terms of interaction with LEAs – other than placement – Short Courses – how satisfied are you that the word is out, and people know about short courses – is there a need for improvement? PD – yes, about all of our programs. We have struggled. SWH – appreciate the packet with information. PD – Barb sends out information frequently as well. KR – we are starting an update email list for Parents and Administrators as well. The goal is to do a monthly update, which would have the calendar for the next three months. NBL – recently spoke with a colleague in regards to an individual who was recently blinded. Discussed Short Courses for immediate needs such as that, for intensive support. Some directors don't know about that availability. How do we make that wealth of talent apparent? BVH – we have been trying to be more intentional about including items from both Centers in the weekly updates for directors. During the sectionals for the State Superintendent's Leadership Conference in the fall, Barb is requesting to add the schools. It would be important for the schools to have an ongoing presence. CASS Conference. To keep schools in the forefront. Also the New Director's Academy.

10:15 am

Teacher Training Updates (UW-Platteville TVI Training Program, Instructional Coaching)

- Kay Rhode, Orientation & Mobility Specialist, WCBVI Outreach
Update to what she and Alisha Ragainis presented on last June. Set up to match a veteran teacher with a new to the field teacher. To provide support. Had three coaches for four proteges. The next year will have five coaches who will be trained this summer. Gather proteges through word of mouth as well as licensing questions. Information sent out via Barb's weekly email to SED alerting them to the program as well. The program has been more than we had hoped for in regards to the success in supporting. The coaches also felt additional support from the other coaches, which was an added benefit. Modeled after some other states' programs, such as Texas. NT – are the coaches compensated? KR – WCBVI has contracted with them and reimbursed mileage. NBL – Where are the coaches coming from? KR – we hand picked the first year coaches, but this year did have an application process including a supervisor recommendation, a teacher recommendation, a letter of recommendation, and reference checks. PD – Such a great program to provide support for the TVIs that often feel isolated. NBL – geographically? KR – last year a group in Hudson, Sparta area, SW WI. A good variety of situations that gave us a feel for different needs. Upcoming will be Milwaukee area, Appleton area, Racine. NBL – where would the initiative from within come? How do we provide the incentive/value for them to participate? PD – From a SED point of view, in the first three years is when professionals make up their mind about continuing in the field. With support, they are more likely to continue. NT – how are the meetings handled? KR – An initial in-person meeting, then continuing communication however they choose. Two more in-person meetings (perhaps at conferences) and the coach observing the protégé. Proteges also gained a lot from observing their coaches. KR – training in the summer goes over best practices as well as soft skills such as communication/listening, working with a team. SWH – Thinking about when I began, and in the first year I was burnt out. Having support is tremendously helpful. BVH – speaking at CASS conference this week. During her DPI update, there is a slide on Outreach. Can add this to that list to include. NBL – very beneficial. All SED are struggling with a shrotage, and without support, with have an even larger issue. KR – IC goes hand in hand with the UW-P program.
- UW-P entering its third year. Four candidates entering the program. A great group of intstructors working together to look at what can overlap and support between courses. A collaboration between UW-P and WCBVI Outreach.

11:40 am

Lunch/Parking

12:18 pm

WISPEI Updates/Family Engagement

- Kedibonye Carpenter, WISPEI Statewide Family Engagement Coordinator
At CESA 4 – WISPEI – Family engagement and culturally responsive family engagement, focusing on African American families, but including all families. Always looking for resources for families and educators around the state. Discussing resources she has gathered for around the state. WISPEI Brochure. Mandy will share resources from Kedi with the Council via email. Handout regarding cultural differences and things to be aware of when working with African American families. Transition Improvement Grant – handout for tips using the Wisconsin Transition App. Early Childhood book/topic resource list in regards to family engagement. DPI Team shared on Serving Homeless Students and Families – handout with resources. Great Rivers 211 Hotline for families (check area availability) also an 800 number. DPI – Christine Nadoski – AmeriCorps Vista – handout – To build capacity of CESAs to improve awareness of homelessness and public schools to serve those students.
- Available as a resource for culture. Can present to groups.

12:31 pm

Braille Formats

- Nemeth/UEB: Vote on Council Recommendations to DPI regarding braille formats
These recommendations have been discussed at previous board meetings. KR – read Dear Colleague letter from the College Board in relation to using Nemeth. Discussion. Small changes. Cheryl Orgas Moves, Chris Zenchenko Seconds to vote. Motion carries unanimously. Mandy will make the adjustments and send the resolution to the Council.
- Forward Exam/UEB Testing Update
11:00 – have received some communication regarding braille being received, but it was a local issue in regards to how the braille was requested. WCBVI IT/AT worked with testing company on accessibility features/issues. Zoom Text works well, not screen readers.

1:15 - SWH – Glen Stacey O&M Chicago Trip – Amazing Race theme with “statue stories” to move around the city. Bus, cab, water taxi, etc. Stephanie Klas – my son Brandon went last year. Had a great time. A great socialization experience as well. SWH – Urban Ecology Center Field Trips – they specifically design lessons for students with visual impairments. KR – in speaking of experiences – next week is Apostle Islands

1:45 pm

Council Business Items

- Review Council By-Laws
- Review Council Vacancies, Recommendations for new members
Discussion. Assignments for members to recruit.
NBL – Stepping down from Chairmanship.
- Council Year End Report to DPI
NBL – Discussion items to highlight for DPI. Pete and Mandy pull out items to highlight. Send Mandy ideas as well.
- Set up Google Group
- Mandy will send out a poll for the Fall meeting. Late September/ Early October. Will set up Google group for continued collaboration throughout this spring and summer.