

UTAH SCHOOLS FOR THE DEAF AND THE BLIND

Advisory Council Minutes

Division of Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired
250 North 1950 West, Suite B
Salt Lake City, Utah

Training Rooms 218 & 219

Date: January 27, 2011

4:30 p.m. - General Session

Attending: Bill Gibson, Chair & Voting Member
Leslie Castle, Non-voting Member
Cheralyn Creer, Voting Member
Scot Ferre, Voting Member
Heather Frost, Voting Member
Von Hortin, Non-voting Member
Scott McAward, Voting Member
Kathryn McCarrie, Voting Member
Marla Palmer, Voting Member
Jeff Pollock, Voting Member
Michelle Tanner, Non-voting Member
Cordie Weed, Voting Member

Also Attending:
Steve Noyce, Superintendent
Betty Hall, Executive Assistant

Interpreters: Crystal Cutler
Clay Anderson
Elizabeth Kocherhans
April Wallace

Administrative Staff Present:
Melanie Austin, Program Director of Blind, Region II
Leslie Buchanan, Program Director of Deafblind Services
Bruce Buland, USDB/DHRM
Tami Gear, Director of Related Services
Marilyn Madsen, Program Director of Deaf South Region
Hollie Murdock, Director of ERC/USIMAC
Barbara Petersen, Program Director of Blind PIP
Jill Radford, Program Director of JMS
Trena Roueche', Program Director of Deaf North
Michael Sears, Finance Director
Betsy Sutherland, Program Director of Deaf Central Region

Others Attending:

Martell Menlove, USOE
David Rodemack, USOE/DHRM
Karl White, Utah State University
Lauri Nelson, Utah State University
Page Worrells, USDB
Carrie Pereyra, USDB
Teresa Owino, USDB
Shellie Sacco, USDB
Jenny Alvey, USDB
Aimee Brienholt, USDB
Shannon Parker, USDB
Taunya Paxton, Parent/ AGBell
Norm Paxton, Parent/AGBell
Katie Tonkovich, USDB/AGBell
Kim Niday, USDB/AGBell
Geri Christensen, USDB/Parent
Sue Beckstead, USDB/Parent
Garrett Bowles, AGBell
Lori Ruth, USDB/AGBell
Rebecca White, USDB
Karen Bartholomew
Pat Renfranz, Parent
Preston Gudmunson, USDB/JMS
Karen Borg, USDB/PIP
Tom Borg, Interested Citizen
Lindsey Wert, USDB/Related Services
Sarah Leathers, USDB/JMS
Ellen O'Hara, USDB/JMS

Chair Bill Gibson welcomed everyone in attendance and introduced Mr. Jeff Pollock, our new deaf adult representative on the Advisory Council.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

Mrs. Cheralyn Creer led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

2. Public Comments

a. Mrs. Geri Christensen's son attends Skyline High School. She is concerned that in a meeting with the counselor they were told that there will not be any core classes at Skyline next year. That is not what they had been promised in the past. Neither she nor her son want him to attend half-day at JMS and half day at Skyline; they want him at Skyline full time. She wants to be sure these students have core classes so they can graduate with everyone else. She reported that he is doing really well and has a 4.0 average.

b. Professor Karl White from the Utah State University noted that in 2007, with funding from the University and a private foundation, a new graduate training program was initiated to provide training to speech language pathologists, deaf educators and pediatric audiologists focusing on

providing services to children whose families have chosen Listening and Spoken Language (LSL).

Last July they partnered with USDB to significantly expand both the graduate training and the early educational program that focused on Listening and the Spoken Language in Northern Utah. It started with six children in 2008 to now serving 30 children. This partnership has been most valuable for USU, for USD and for families. Other benefits are research that can be conducted that supports the activities of USD and the kind of in-service training they can provide USD teachers at no cost because of state and federal funding. He appreciates the partnership that has been developed and hopes it will continue in the future.

3. Consent Calendar Approval

Mrs. Cheralyn Creer made a motion to accept the Advisory Council minutes of the November 29, 2010 meeting, the Personnel Actions for November and December 2010 and the Donated Account Summary for November and December 2010. Dr. Scott McAward seconded. Motion carried.

4. Filling Vacant Vice-chair Position

Dr. Kathryn McCarrie made a motion to nominate Mr. Scot Ferre to the position of Vice-chair. Mrs. Heather Frost seconded. Mr. Ferre accepted the nomination. There being no other nominations, Mr. Von Horton moved to vote by acclamation. Mrs. Frost seconded. Motion carried.

5. Council's Role in Making a Recommendation to the State Board on the Continuance of the Superintendent's Contract

Dr. Martell Menlove explained the USDB Advisory Council's role in advising the Utah State Board of Education (USBE) concerning the employment of the superintendent and associate superintendents. He gave a handout addressing Superintendent Noyce's "360" Evaluation. The State Board would like to be directly involved in this evaluation. He proposed that the USDB Advisory Council and the Board jointly conduct that evaluation. He would take the proposed questions and who will be surveyed back to the Board for their consideration. The State Board wants to be the final say as to what that survey looks like but also wants feedback. Dr. Menlove also proposed timelines to accomplish this task.

Mr. Dave Rodemack explained that the evaluation would be handled by an outside contracted firm and explained the process. He also noted that a "360" is not to make hire or fire decisions; it is to help superintendent with information to more effectively function. Mr. Pollock asked if the questions would be available to Advisory Council. Dr. Menlove will provide them to Mrs. Hall to forward. It was agreed that Council will address these needs at the end of tonight's meeting.

6. Subcommittee's Recommendation to Conduct a Survey.

Mr. Ferre indicated that he and Mrs. Tanner are still working on the survey. There is no recommendation at this time. Mrs. Tanner will e-mail the survey questions when they are ready,

INFORMATION

7. Budget

Mr. Michael Sears reported on the budget and cost data for November and December 2010. He indicated that the important thing for us to follow is variance; we need to know what spend to stay on budget. Mr. Sears will present a graph in the next meeting to show savings generated. He explained funds that may not come in, i.e., bad debts, Medicaid, and/or legislative actions.

Mrs. Tanner asked about the donated account showing \$10,000 uncleared transactions. Mr. Sears explained that there was too much money in the checking account. It is an anomaly, one time a year only. Those funds were put back in the PTIF.

Mr. Ferre asked about an across the board cut. Mr. Sears noted we will need to wait to see if we get more cuts. The Public Ed Appropriations Committee will need to come up with a recommendation for 7%. They might treat us separately since we do not participate in WPU's. There could be a myriad of options.

8. AGBell

Mr. and Mrs. Norm Paxton used a PowerPoint presentation to give an introduction to AGBell-Utah. Copies of the presentation and several position statements were handed out. Mrs. Paxton elaborated on their history, what they stand for and emphasized what AGBell is and is not. She cited the many services AGBell provides. She also explained issues with insurances, etc. AGBell has opened parent's eyes to many things.

Mr. Garrett Frost addressed Council. He is a deaf student that graduated from Orem High School and is now in his first semester at Utah Valley. His parents did not find out he was deaf until he was 4 years old. He has been oral all his life and has also been involved with AGBell since preschool. It was through them that they learned about Cochlear Implants. It has changed his life. Mr. Frost praised AGBell for helping him to gain confidence and be active. He is also a recipient of an AG Bell scholarship.

Mr. Ferre explained his role as VR counselor with Rehab and concurred with problems with insurance companies to get aids or Cochlear Implants. He asked Mr. Paxton if they keep statistics on their members that achieve meaningful employment. Mr. Paxton said they do not but would be interested in working with Mr. Ferre.

9. USIMAC

Mrs. Hollie Murdock responded to a public comment at Council's November meeting. She explained that USIMAC's mission is to deliver core materials to all print disabled children in Utah in an accessible format and in a timely manner. She expressed current concerns with some school districts handling of "accessible materials" that do not meet appropriate standards in order to live within their budget cuts. She emphasized USDB's procedures to assure quality products, e.g., certified braille transcribers, certified proofreaders and double

proofing. Past, present and future production increases were given and budget to actual costs were cited.

Mrs. Murdock asked that Council support the recommendation to the State Board of Education that:

- a. All funds are given to USIMAC up front or to provide funds that can be borrowed until district invoices are paid.
- b. Enough staff to meet the ever growing need.
- c. Allocate funding to increase recruiting in universities for students to become Library of Congress (LOC) certified.
- d. If funding is given to USIMAC, they would produce and/or procure all core materials for all students throughout the state of Utah no matter their district. This would give complete equal access.

Mrs. Murdock asked for a Council recommendation to produce all materials within USIMAC rather than using an outside vendor if USIMAC can produce it cheaper and with the same or better quality. There was also some discussion that some districts are turning to audio materials as a cost savings.

Last year USIMAC's annual budget was \$498,000 but actual costs were \$672,000. This resulted in a manpower shortage. Mrs. Murdock asked for Council's help in taking this information to the Board.

Superintendent indicated he has met with several representatives. Representative Handy is writing a bill for USIMAC to have access to funding when our expenses exceed the appropriation + 75%. Mr. Sears explained that we don't know what books will be ordered. We are also hesitant to increase staff. If Representative Handy's bill is passed, USIMAC would have access to discretionary funds if needed.

Chair Gibson asked Superintendent to meet with him about a co-sponsor. LCPD might be good source for contacts and invite legislators to come down.

Mrs. Creer asked how to proceed with these recommendations. Chair Gibson instructed Mrs. Hall to put them on the next agenda as an action item. Mrs. Creer will contact Mrs. Murdock to work out draft language so this can be presented to the Board.

10. USDB Advisory Update

Ms. Chris Timothy was unable to attend this meeting but provided a written USDB Advisory Update that was included in the Council packet. Information covered was:

- a. Outlines
- b. Braille Standards
Mrs. Tanner asked if Council will see them before they are sent out. Mrs. Austin noted they are currently in quality assurance. When they are done, they be brought to Council.
- c. Effective Practices for Teachers of the Blind & Visually Impaired

- d. National Deaf Agenda
Mrs. Tanner asked who will be coordinating with Ms. Timothy since Mrs. Jennifer Howell is gone. She asked if there is a list of committee members and how many are deaf. Superintendent will follow up.
- e. Interagency Agreement

11. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

a. Review and Answer Questions on the Annual Report to USBE

Superintendent Noyce noted that Council received copies of the Annual Report he presented to the State Board of Education. He felt that USBE needed to understand how USDB had evolved; especially based on the new board rules and the legislative change in codes authorizing USDB. Back in 1987 the Board had approved a master plan which gave a mission statement for USDB's services to D/HH and B/VI children. To many of them, that was news to them. Important issues called for parent involvement and communication choices. He briefly reviewed that master plan for Council. The State Board rules deal with those issues and have basically reaffirmed that same direction that USDB has been going. The Board rules have been very effective and helpful in many ways.

Superintendent explained the process of guidelines (also known as outlines or decision trees.) in IEP team discussions to determine student placement. This has been very positive.

However, Rule 277-800-7E has created some traumatic difficulties for USDB, particularly the 3% rule. This has been discussed with Council several times. He also noted USIMAC fiscal agent funding issues cited earlier this evening and our moral and legal responsibility to provide these services to children and families and as a vehicle for districts.

Superintendent also notified USBE of progress in goal areas, i.e., early braille literacy, standards, and competency in USB. Significant professional development training was provided to USB staff. Standard curriculum was also noted. Short term courses are being paid by fundraisers. In USD, early intervention and early childhood programs were emphasized. PIP programs both in USB and USD have been redesigned with more intense components. Progress in other areas was noted as well.

- b. Superintendent also informed USBE that, beginning now, USDB is pushing for expansion of statewide services in the following areas. He elaborated on what will be required.

- (1) Low Vision Clinics
- (2) Audiological Services
- (3) Interpreter Services
- (4) Sensory Specific Educational Technology

Mr. Ferre asked what recommendations Council should focus on giving support, noting that the 3% rule was probably the most important.

Superintendent felt it will take years to reverse the 3% rule. He said that the four items noted above are primary.

Chair Gibson commented that low vision clinics are vital. We need to provide students with as many skills as we possibly can. It is the tendency of certified people and others doing low vision services to maximize sight as much as they can. This doesn't increase reading speed or allow students to become literate in braille. He hopes that in the process the people doing low vision evaluations knows it's also good to tell parents, students and others that braille might be the best means for the student and they should also emphasize the other services. He praised USDB for their progress with braille literacy.

Mrs. Weed asked about consolidating services. Chair Gibson commented that TVI teachers bring students into DSBVI once in a while. They are allowed to purchase items from the low vision store. He offered to Superintendent that if USDB has any low vision staff that would like to become certified by spending a specific number of hours with someone who is certified at DSBVI, they would be pleased to help. .

12. OTHER

- a. Superintendent asked Mrs. Jill Radford to comment on the spitting of classes between Skyline High School and JMS. She explained that two USDB teachers at Skyline were brought back to JMS. They realized that they needed more of a range with JMS as well as the students. Most students take classes from those two teachers and then are still mainstreamed into several other classes through USDB. It is more cost effective to bring those students back to JMS to provide more high quality services through these teachers. They do plan to continue their partnership with Skyline but will be phasing out the current program because we cannot add any more students to that program. With the recent loss of Mrs. Jennifer Howell, they are now working on a plan and will report at a future meeting.
- b. Mr. Ferre asked about speech language pathologists on staff. Superintendent gave a breakdown by division.
- c. Mrs. Tanner inquired about deaf mentor position announcements. She noted 86 students have been referred but 50 are not being served. Superintendent said they were interviewing deaf mentors within the last few weeks.
- b. Mrs. Tanner announced that teams are here in Salt Lake City to participate in the Western States Basketball Classic tournament. Mrs. Radford gave the schedule. They encouraged Council's support. More information is available at www.wsbcb2011.com.
- c. Mrs. Austin announced the "Love is Blind" event on Friday, February 22, 2011 at the Red Lion Hotel in Salt Lake City. It will include dinner and dancing with live and silent auctions available as fundraisers. This is sponsored by the Utah Foundation for the Blind. More information is available at www.ufbvi.org.

13. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mrs. Palmer made a motion to go into executive session. Dr. McCarrie seconded. Mrs. Hall called the role and received a unanimous vote to convene. Motion carried.

Dr. McCarrie made a motion to return to open session. Dr. McAward seconded. Mrs. Hall took a role call and received a unanimous vote. Motion carried.

Dr. McCarrie made a motion to proceed with the 360 evaluation with individuals being surveyed as determined in closed session. Mrs. Creer seconded. Motion carried.

Dr. McCarrie moved to close the Advisory Council meeting at 10:10 p.m.

DRAFT