

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
Training Rooms 218 & 219
Salt Lake City, Utah

Date: April 28, 2011

4:30 p.m. - General Session

Attending: Bill Gibson, Chair & Voting Member
Leslie Castle, Non-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

Excused: Cheralyn Creer, Voting Member

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

Interpreters: Crystal Cutler
Dawn Duran
Robin Loder
April Wallace

Administrative Staff Present:

Melanie Austin, Program Director of Blind, Region II
Bruce Buland, Director of HR/DHRM
Leslie Buchanan, Program Director of Deafblind Services
Tami Gear, Director of Related Services
Day Mullings, Program Director of Deaf PIP
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 Region
Michael Sears, Finance Director
Betsy Sutherland, Program Director of Deaf Central Region

Others Attending:

Martell Menlove, USOE
David Rodemack, USOE/DHRM
Jan Ferre', LCPD
Susan Patten, USDB Deafblind
Page Worrells, USDB Related Services
Teresa Owino, USD-JMS
Bonilynn Henrie, USD-JMS
Sharon Zenger, USB, Region II
Dave Simmons, USDB
Christina Blazer, Utah State University
Carol MacNicholl, Utah State University
Ellen O'Hara, USDB-JMS
Trenton Marsh, Deaf Community
Aimee Breinholt, USDB-JMS
Jane Walker, USDB, South Deaf Region
Kim Saul, USDB South Deaf Region
Heather Gourley, USDB South Region
Nancy Whiting, PIP Deaf
Shannon Parker, USDB-JMS
Duane Kinner, Parent
Jodi Kinner, Parent
Robert Jacobs, Parent
J.R. Goff, Parent of JMS Children
Stephanie Mathis, Parent of JMS Children
Leanna Gale, JMS
Lance Gale, Spouse
Crystal Ness, Parent of JMS Child
Jenney Alvey, USDB
Shellie Norton, USDB
Javier Herrera USDB
Nick Colton, Friend of Parent
Melissa Miller, Parent
Dan Mathis, Parent
Jake Mathis, JMS Student (4th Grade)
Chrystee Davenport, Deaf Advocate
Stephanie Belshe, Deaf Advocate,
Kenneth Kinner, Grandparent of JMS Kids
Ilene Kinner, Grandparent of JMS Kids
Sally Green, UAD
Robert Kerr, UAD
Christine Reese, USDB
Brianna Downey, Citizen & Friend
Cathy Boyd, USDB
Christine Wood, USDB Audiologist

1. Welcome and Pledge of Allegiance
Chair Bill Gibson welcomed Advisory Council, USDB Administrative Staff, teachers, students and the public. Mrs. Leslie Castle led the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Public Comments
Ms. Ellen O'Hara, teacher at USDB-JMS, commented on the negativity of Advisory Council fighting over ASL vs. Oral. She said that we need to support both, respect choices, and have each program receive money equally. Ms. O'Hara also indicated that Mrs. Michelle Tanner has been listening to and representing all teachers. She expressed concern for the lack of respect shown to Mrs. Tanner for sharing her thoughts.
3. Consent Calendar Approval
A spelling error on page 5 [Lasaster was corrected to Lasater] and a grammatical error on page 7 [what to information] were noted and corrected to the minutes of the March 31, 2011 Meeting. Dr. Scott McAward made a motion to accept the minutes as corrected, the Personnel Actions Report for March 2011, and the Donated Account Summary for March 2011. Ms. Cordie Weed seconded. Motion carried.
4. Skyline High School/JMS.
Mrs. Jill Radford, Director/Principal of USDB-JMS used a PowerPoint and handout to explain the events over the past year regarding JMS and the Skyline High School program. There has been parent concern. She quoted current and predicted classroom student and teacher statistics for both Skyline and JMS and educational interpreters at Skyline.

Mrs. Radford discussed (a) learning to function in the "real world," (b) establishing friendships with hearing peers, (c) student choice, (d) mainstreaming opportunities for students, and (e) that high school and elementary students do not intermingle. She also expressed grave concern about graduate students' reading levels. There was a discussion on core and elective classes. She also explained that if 18 year olds are not ready then they go into Mrs. Trina Roueche's STEP program.

INFORMATION

5. Budget
Mr. Michael Sears reviewed revenue and expenditures. USDB will do three furlough days. There is 25% of the year left with 30% of the budget remaining; it is very close this year. He explained the additional information provided on the Cost Data Report. Transportation routes have been reduced. RIF'S are not recommended at this time but may need to do so in May; if so, it will be non-educator staff.

6. a. Promises to Keep

Mrs. Leslie Castle gave and reviewed two handouts “Promises to Keep” which is the Utah State Office of Education’s mission/vision statement and “High Quality Instruction Defined.” Council should keep focused on literacy and numeracy and remind themselves that items presented at Council should deal with their mission. She noted that Mrs. Radford’s presentation is exactly what Advisory Council should be addressing. She also gave a quote regarding high quality instruction that Superintendent Shumway gave in his State of Education speech

Chair Gibson asked that the handouts and speech be sent electronically. It helps our visually impaired members access the information. Mrs. Castle will send those documents to Council tomorrow.

Mrs. Heather Frost suggested that Advisory Council develop a mission statement to go along with the “Promises to Keep.” Chair Gibson said he will put it on the next agenda and asked members to bring statements to be considered. Council will take time to work on it.

b. Advisory Council Agenda

Mrs. Castle praised implementation of the timed agenda for tonight’s meeting and encouraged the Chair to keep “Promises to Keep” in mind as future agendas are developed. This applies not only in meetings but in e-mails too.

7. Results of the USDB Job Satisfaction Survey

Mr. Ferre reported on the responses to the Job Satisfaction Survey. There was 50% participation so it is a representative sample. It was noted that the timing of sending the survey out after the furloughs were announced might have influenced the answers. Though the survey appeared a bit skewed, the school is reasonably happy. Mr. Ferre proposed doing an annual survey to give staff the opportunity to express feelings. Mrs. Tanner asked Mr. Hortin to e-mail the data.

8. Update from Committees

a. Budget & Finance

The committee, comprised of Mr. Sears, Mr. Hortin, Mrs. Tanner, Dr. McCarrie and Mr. Todd Hauber, met on April 4, 2011. Dr. McCarrie was unable to attend but left notes. They discussed revenue streams and other options to come in on budget. Major items affecting the budget were bad debt from last year, potential bad debts this year and Medicare. Administration has met with teachers to discuss their concerns; there will be some consolidations. Any proposed RIF’s will be discussed with Superintendent Noyce.

b. Legislative & State Board of Education Awareness

Mrs. Frost reported that the committee discussed asking directors to collect assessments that showed longitudinal testing over a period of time. Mrs. Renee Moore of USDB will collect student assessment on current students. Mrs. Glenna Gallow of USOE will collect assessment information after the students have been mainstreamed. Mrs. Holly Hyatt will coordinate some of

the collection of data for her doctorate. USU will also participate. Mrs. Tanner explained how that information will be beneficial.

c. Development & Community Relations

Mrs. Palmer encouraged everyone to read the e-mail she sent this afternoon. Mrs. Kim Pierce has joined the committee. The committee met and discussed:

- Fundraising and grant involvement by USDB is good. Suggestions for staff accountability were given to Mrs. Pierce.
- 501C3 - Superintendent is working on a process to set up a foundation.
- Superintendent asked the committee to help gather **friend** raising/relationships.
- Dr. McAward cited relationships with higher education and will contact Mrs. Roueche'.
- Mrs. Pierce will change the face of the website to address complaints. Her secretary will follow up on referrals.
- Follow same protocol. Facilitate and confirm that we are responding. Mrs. Pierce will check with Superintendent.
- Will develop a glossary of terms (acronyms) for Mrs. Pierce.
- Distribution of Sights & Sounds and issues with registry.
- Recommended that communication to parents go through Mrs. Pierce.

Mrs. Tanner asked about a sole grant writer to obtain funds. Superintendent explained that we have been ineligible for many grants we have applied for because we haven't had a 501C3. Both Chair Gibson and Dr. McCarrie affirmed that some grants have so many strings attached they are not worth pursuing. They said a foundation is a much better way to go.

9. USOE Task Force

Dr. Martell Menlove reported that the task force has met twice and is developing a set of questions which will address USDB's organization and processes. Members are Mrs. Castle, Mr. Joe Coleman, Mrs. Tami Pyfer, and Mrs. Dixie Allen from USBE, Representatives Jennifer Seeling and Steve Handy, as legislative representatives. Mr. Todd Hauber and Dr. Menlove are staffing the task force.

He explained that the task force is the result of a meeting where someone recommended that USDB be closed to answer budget cuts. There was never a consideration to close the schools, however, that comment created a question "Is the school organized in the most effective, efficient way to best meet the needs of students with sensory impairments?"

There will be a public hearing on Thursday, May 26, 2011 at DSBVI from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. It will be structured with four or five specific questions to be addressed. It is not for general commentary. The task force will stay and be part of the regular Advisory Council.

10. Utah State University/Sound Beginnings

With a PowerPoint and handout, Ms. Christina Blazer from USU gave the history of Sound Beginnings and explained how it became a joint program with USDB. Higher education could not have students on IEP's. In 2008 they began working together to develop a formal partnership. Mrs. Roueche' directs the Sound Beginnings in the Deaf North Region.

A symbiotic relationship was explained where each entity gives and gains from each other. It was noted that USU pays for graduate students and USDB pays for classroom expenses. More information can be obtained at www.soundbeginnings.usu.edu.

Dr. McCarrie asked how many qualified teachers stay within the state after completing their training. Mrs. Blazer will send that information via e-mail.

11. USDB Educational Directors Statement

Mrs. Leslie Buchanan reviewed a position statement that was developed by the USDB Educational Directors under Superintendent Noyce's leadership. They are asking for Council's support with the task force. She noted that these ten directors have more than 200 years of combined experience working with children with disabilities. Their knowledge and experience needs to be valued. Chair Gibson said that they are valued and we will work more closely together in the future.

12. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent discussed due process hearings:

A1. He referred to a letter sent by a parent to Advisory Council. He explained the process that took place in determining that residential services were not justified for this student. There was a great deal of discussion in reviewing with parents, districts, etc. The parent challenged the change of placement. The hearing officer extended the time several times for the family and then dismissed the challenge. The student has been placed in the district. The parent has refiled.

A2. USDB has filed a due process. The parent had been asking for numerous independent educational evaluations that required a great deal of time and expense. Costs for the evaluations were cited. We have determined that it is time to challenge. We have confidence in our employees, teachers and staff who are doing these evaluations. We would like Advisory Council to look at the process and support that we are the experts.

There was a discussion on IEE. Superintendent indicated we have copied Jordan District's IEE policy.

B. Superintendent reported on the webinar on the Summit of Deaf Education. The morning session dealt with providing services through itinerant teachers. USDB already has extensive services. The afternoon was presented by the state of Washington. In 2002-03 they did a two year study of their services to the deaf and hard of hearing. Eleven issues

were raised. The results spurred Washington to change their system. USDB is already doing everything; we are a whole generation ahead of Washington. He encouraged everyone to go into the website.

Mrs. Palmer asked how Advisory Council can help when they see issues. Superintendent said that we have now created audiological and low vision protocols as standards for staff training. He would like Council to explain to constituents that we need time to get our house in order. We are making great effort to go forward. We don't have money for professional development. He cited that we do have professionals that meet and exceed the standards for the state. Help advocate for USDB.

Chair Gibson advised Council of the death of Mrs. Marilyn Madsen's husband. She is the director of the Deaf South Region. Obituary information was provided. A condolence card was routed along with an envelope for contributions if members so desired.

Dr. McCarrie made a motion to go into executive session. Dr. McAward seconded. Mrs. Hall took a roll call vote and received a unanimous vote to convene.

Dr. McCarrie moved to go into open session. Ms. Weed seconded. A roll call vote was unanimous.

Dr. McCarrie recommended the next Advisory Council agenda be limited to business items due to the Task Force Public Hearing.

Mrs. Frost announced the dinner and auction fundraiser for blind Olympics which will be held in Ogden on Thursday, May 5, 2011.

Dr. McCarrie move to adjourn at 10:25 p.m.