



**TEXAS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF
GOVERNING BOARD**

**Governing Board Meeting
December 15, 2006**

Minutes

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 p.m. by Jean Andrews, Vice President.

Attending: Jean Andrews, Vice President
Nancy Carrizales, Secretary
Beatrice Burke
Walt Camenisch
Sha Cowan
Connie Sefcik-Kennedy
Angie Wolf

Absent: Charles Estes
Dale Kesterson

2. Approval of Minutes from the October 5, 2006 Meeting

Walt Camenisch moves to approve the minutes of the October 5, 2006 meeting. Nancy Carrizales seconds and the motion passes.

3. Audience speakers to Address the Board; Introduction of Visitors

None.

4. Superintendent's Report (*This report is shared in writing and notes reflect those areas discussed at the board meeting.*)

- A. FY06 Operating Budget Update
- B. FY07 Operating Budget Update
- C. TSD Airport Exhibit Tour
- D. Positive Behavioral Support
- E. Enrollment Update – Claire Bugen shared that we have had additional enrollments since the report was written and that our goal is to reach 500 by the end of the school year. The enrollment includes a high number of our students are over the age of 16 but we have an increased trend in the number of elementary admissions which is positive.
- F. Summer Programs
- G. Partnership with Tianjin School for the Deaf. Mark Gobble and Avonne Brooker Rutowski shared that we are very excited about this partnership. We discussed our partnership and possibility of exchange students. We will be sharing curriculum and hopefully student staff. The school has new facilities and is one of the first schools in China to use the bilingual approach to teaching. China, as a nation is very oral education focused. They have 200 teachers and 13 are deaf. Some of the deaf teachers went to colleges and some did not. The deaf teachers typically are assigned to non-academic areas although some do teach in the classrooms. Dr.



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Richard Lytle from Gallaudet is responsible for setting up this partnership. UNICEF helped support their trip to the United States. The next step is to set up videoconferencing/phones and work on exchanges.

- H. Sesquicentennial Closing Event
- I. Student and Staff Holiday Party
- J. ERCOD Staff Update. Rebecca Starr, former Outreach and Development Specialist has moved to Houston. Keena Miller is replacing her on a temporary basis. ERCOD has also added a part time parent liaison supported by federal funds received through TEA. Her name is Lisa Crawford.
- K. TSD Technology Plan
- L. Academic Bowl
- M. Deaf Teen America Pageant
- N. Kars & Kids Event
- O. Inauguration Parade

5. Report on Student Dress Code

Avonne Brooker-Rutowski introduced High School students Chris Kearny and Danny Markowski. Chris and Danny shared that they thought it was important that the Dress Code for students be improved and enforced. They set up a committee and received input from students. They were surprised how many students had never even seen the dress code. The dress code was reviewed by staff and is now being brought to the Governing Board. Chris and Danny reviewed each area of the dress code. Beatrice Burke asked what was the next step. Avonne Brooker-Rutowski stated that the dress code will go home to parents the last week of December and will be implemented in January.

Walt Camenisch stated he was in total support of the new dress code and if there were any students who objected. Danny and Chris stated there were students who objected but the majority of students were in support of the dress code.

Jean Andrews asked if the students would be disciplined if the new dress code were not followed. Avonne Brooker-Rutowski responded that the Principal's would discipline the students who do not follow the dress code. If students are not complying with the new dress code it might be wise to set up a Student Judiciary Board or a Peer Advisory Group.

Connie Sefcik-Kennedy thanked Chris and Danny for the work on the dress code.

6. Report on Positive Behavior Support

Gloria Seidlin-Bernstein and Vicki White provided an overview of the Positive Behavior Support program. PBS is the emphasis on school-wide systems of support that include proactive strategies for defining, teaching, and supporting appropriate student behaviors to create positive school environments. Instead of using a patchwork of individual behavioral management plans, a continuum of positive behavior support for all students within a school is implemented in areas including the classroom and non-classroom settings (such as hallways, restrooms). Attention is focused on creating and sustaining primary (school-wide), secondary (classroom), and tertiary (individual) systems of support that improve lifestyle results (personal, health, social, family, work, recreation) for all children and youth by making problem behavior less effective, efficient, and relevant, and desired behavior more functional. A core team has been set up to guide and direct the process. The core



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team is led by Avonne Brooker-Rutowski, Vicki White and Gloria Seidlin-Bernstein. It includes principals, Supervisors of Residential Services, Behavior Support Coordinator and other key staff as needed. Each department team of Principal and Supervisor of Residential Services presented their PBS plan. Each system, although unique and age appropriate had the following components in common a) an agreed upon and common approach to discipline, b) a positive statement of purpose, c) a small number of positively stated expectations for all students and staff, d) procedures for teaching these expectations to students, e) a continuum of procedures for encouraging displays and maintenance of these expectations, f) a continuum of procedures for discouraging displays of rule-violating behavior, and g) procedures for monitoring and evaluation the effectiveness of the discipline system on a regular and frequent basis, including opportunities to reward and celebrate positive behavior.

7. Textbook Committee

Beatrice Burke moved to approve the following members of the Textbook Committee:

Dawn Kidd, Middle School Teacher
Dana Stoddard, Middle School Teacher
Marie Dickinson, High School Teacher
Bill Eckstein, High School Teacher
Kevin Harrer, High School Teacher
Mike Hummel, High School Teacher
Paul Stropko, High School Teacher
Susie Kornvken, Parent
Laura Oberrender, Parent
Sharee Darce, Teaching/Learning Specialist
Priscilla Farrall, Textbook Coordinator

Walt Camenisch seconded and the motion passes.

8. Video Relay Service at TSD

Claire Bugen stated that Connie Sefcik-Kennedy had requested this item on the agenda. TSD has been fortunate to deal with a variety of VRS providers and to receive support from many.

Claire Bugen introduced David Coco who is responsible for VRS at TSD to present an overview of the VRS at TSD and to answer any questions from the board.

David Coco made a presentation to the Board.

Videophones at TSD allow for:

- Deaf to deaf communication
- Deaf to hearing phone calls via VRS
- Educational programs
- Family Signs
- Homebound TSD students
- Connecting to deaf adults
- Connecting to deaf classes in other schools

A brief History of VRS:



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1995 - First VRS trial in Texas
1996 - Second VRS trial (Texas and Maryland)
2000 - CSD begins VRS service in Texas and Washington State
2001 - CSD and Sprint announce nationwide VRS service
2003 - Sorenson and HOVRS begin services

2003 - TSD installs two videophones
2006 - TSD installs 114 VP 200s - more than any other school for the deaf in the US

TSD currently has

- 114 videophones (all VP 200s)
- 2 videophone booths (in Koen and Lewis)
- At least one videophones in each department with a deaf staff
- 25 iSights (Mac webcams) that can be used with HOVRS and for intra-TSD communication
- 10 Time Warner RoadRunner lines

TSD currently has 5 VRS sponsors

- Sorenson, Sprint, CSD, Verizon, HOVRS
- We put sponsors on all TSD VRS speed dial lists
- TSD students and staff can use any VRS provider

VRS Sponsorship Benefits to TSD:

- Scholarship program (Sprint)
- Videophone equipment (Sprint, Sorenson, HOVRS)
- Training for staff (HOVRS)
- Sponsorship for TSD programs (Sorenson)
 - Family Signs
 - Successful Communication with VRS* - book for students
- Time Warner modem (Sorenson, Sprint, Verizon)
- VRS maintenance (Sorenson, Sprint, Verizon)

Walt Camenisch asked how much money TSD has received from VRS Providers. David stated that it varies but that Sorenson has given \$50,000. Claire Bugen added that part of that \$50,000 covers a portion of David's salary.

Challenges of VRS

- No intra-network calls (TSD network to TSD network)
- Video quality varies
- Incoming calls - challenges
 - No easy to use phonebook yet
 - No easy way to alerting the deaf person in different room
 - No way to transfer calls from switchboard
- Firewall issues with other agencies
 - No TSD network calls to ACC currently



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TSD Policies on Videophones

- Videophone = Telephone
 - TSD telephone policies apply to videophones
 - TSD owns the videophones
- Each department (or dorm) will set their own specific rules
- Staff - primary goal => **communication access to do their job**
 - Reasonable use for personal calls
 - Privacy, if needed
- Students - primary goal => **safety**
 - Videophones set up in public area so staff can monitor

Connie Sefcik-Kennedy stated that TSD recently had a Sorenson event on campus and students were invited the auditorium to participate. TSD needs to be selfish with the teaching time and not allow moneymaking enterprises to interfere with our student's time. She requested that some guidelines be developed so this will not happen in the future.

Jean Andrews stated that it depends if the presentations are to sell equipment and services or teach our students and staff how to use the equipment. We will have to monitor.

Beatrice Burke shared that she attended the Sorenson event and did not believe that Sorenson was marketing their product to our students. It was good exposure for our students and Deaf Teen America benefited by a donation of a big screen TV for a raffle.

9. Professional Contracts for 2006 – 2007

Claire Bugen shared that we are recommending two professional contracts for board approval. Merrilee Gietz is the AS"L Distance Learning Teacher and Chris Kuhns is a special needs teacher.

Walt Camenisch moved to approve professional contracts fro Merrilee Gietz and Chris Kuhns. Connie Sefcik-Kennedy seconded and the motion passes.

Walt Camenisch proposed that they the area of teacher certification be considered by our internal auditor for this year. Claire Bugen indicated that this was possible but thought the audit would be more beneficial after TSD had developed and presented to the Board a new teacher certification policy. Walt also expressed an interest in having some training on the various types of certification that are awarded by SBEC (State Board of Educator Certification). Claire indicated that this training would occur in the spring.

10. Update on Construction

Gary Bego reported that the interim work is progressing well on Clinger Gym but that the deterioration of a membrane under the cooper roof has required additional roofing work not built into the original contract. We are also retrofitting six elevators and anticipate the project will be complete by the end of December.



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11. Annual Financial Report

Gary Bego reported that Annual Financial Report is a requirement and its format and content is prescribed by the Comptroller of Public Accounts. No action is needed on this item.

12. FY06 Operating Budget Update

Gary Bego reported that we have closed out the FY06 and moved all funds remaining in the FY06 budget to the FY07 budget. In September, we received a \$467,923 payment from TEA for prior year adjustments. We expended \$129,874 of this amount on FY06 expenses and moved the balance of \$338,049 into FY07.

13. FY07 Operating Budget Update

Gary Bego reported that we began the fiscal year with a \$434,000 deficit. Salary lapses and reimbursement for personal care services from school health and Related Services (SHARS) have reduced the deficit significantly. Barring unforeseen expenses we should be able to cover the deficit with salary lapses between now and the end of the fiscal year. We will continue to send monthly updates to the board and closely monitor the departmental budgets and spending through ELT meetings.

14. Annual Internal Audit Report for FY 2006

Gary Bego reported that Garza/Gonzales, TSD's Internal Auditors, have prepared the annual audit report for board approval. The audits conducted this past year were the Purchasing Divisions' Procurement Card Program and Instructional Areas and follow-up to prior internal audits.

Walt Camenisch requested that the Internal Auditors review all contract employees, their current certification and what certification is required for the employee. Walt also requested Jeff Hall to present the varied requirements for certification for contract employment.

Claire Bugen clarified that the internal auditor will audit TSD's policy addressing contract staff and required certifications. TSD's policy will be amended and presented at a board meeting next Spring.

Walt Camenisch moved to approve the Annual Internal Audit Report for FY2006. Connie Sefcik-Kennedy seconded and the motion passes.

15. Internal Auditor Contract for 2006 – 2007

Gary Bego shared that in August of 2003, the board selected Garza/Gonzales and Associates to provide internal auditing services for the school. The current contract expired November 30, 2006 and we are submitting a new contract to the board for the period of December 1, 2006 through November 30, 2007.

Beatrice Burked moved to approve the internal auditor contract with Garza/Gonzales and Associates for the period of December 1, 2006 through November 30, 2007. Nancy Carrizales seconds and the motion passes.



16. Policy Revisions

Beatrice Burke moved to amend policies:

EHBA Special Programs: Special Education
EHBA Special Education: Identification, Evaluation, and Eligibility
EHBAB Special Education: Individual Education Plan (IEP) and ARDs
EHBAC Special Education: Students in Nondistrict Placement
EHBAD Special Education: Transition Services

as revised by the Policy Committee and adopt:

EHBAE Special Education: Procedural Requirements

as revised by the Policy Committee. No second is needed. Motion passes.

17. TSD Annual Report 2006

Claire reviewed the Annual Report, Making History, Making a Difference. The report is provided by divisions and summarizes the years activities with interesting facts and data. Claire emphasized the section of the report on accountability, which is required under our MOU on Accountability with TEA.

Claire reminded the Board that they had a presentation on the assessment results in August. Connie Sefcik-Kennedy complimented Joey Vaughan on the tips for parents on literacy, math, and writing development and mentioned that PTA might benefit from such a presentation. The Board expressed their appreciation of the Annual Report design and content.

Nancy Carrizales moved to accept the Annual Report for 2005 – 2006. Angie Wolf seconded and motion passes.

18. Election of Board Officers

Beatrice Burke nominated Jean Andrews as President. Nancy Carrizales seconded and motion passes.

Nancy Carrizales nominated Walt Camenisch as Vice President. Beatrice Burke seconded and motion passes.

Walt Camenisch nominated Connie Sefcik-Kennedy as Secretary. Beatrice Burke seconded and motion passes.

19. Reports or Discussion by Individual Board Members

Sha Cowan shared that the Legislature needs to see board members, especially now that we have two deaf officers. Claire stated that she would share the dates of the hearings as soon as we are notified.

Beatrice Burke thanked Carol for sharing the structure of legislation in the Policy Committee meeting and thanked the interpreters for their work today. Glad to see Wess is recovering from his auto



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accident. She was very pleased to see the student participation in the dress code revisions and presentation at the board meeting. She also commented on the Elementary Drama this morning and how wonderful it was to watch the multicultural celebrations and the memorization of lines by the students was great.

Connie Sefcik-Kennedy shared how amazed she was at Chris and Danny and their participation in the dress code. Their confidence as they presented to the board was amazing. The Elementary Drama was great and those students showed confidence in their performances.

Sha Cowan thanked Gloria Seidlin-Bernstein, Gary Bego and Frank Hipchen for the work that went into getting the SHARS reimbursement funds. She knows first hand how challenging that was.

Connie Sefcik-Kennedy shared that ECI will have it's first annual conference related to deaf and hard of hearing children. Not sure of the date but Debbie White and Diana Poeppelmeyer are on the planning committee.

Claire Bugen reported that the Foundation has a new treasurer, August Harris (nicknamed "Happy") who is replacing Charles Estes.

Walt Camenisch would like time to visit some classrooms. Claire said she would arrange for visits.

Jean Andrews indicated that she would like to have additional information on Reading First Grant.

20. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 5:03 p.m.