

**MINUTES OF THE  
JOINT MEETING OF THE UTAH STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
ACTING AS THE GOVERNING BOARD FOR THE  
UTAH SCHOOLS FOR THE DEAF AND THE BLIND  
AND THE USDB ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**October 5, 2018**

A joint meeting of the Utah State Board of Educating Acting as the Governing Board for the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind and the USDB Advisory Council was held October 5, 2018 at the C. Mark Openshaw Education Center, 1655 East 3300 South, Salt Lake City, Utah. Chair Mark Huntsman presided.

**USBE Members Present:**

Chair Mark Huntsman	Member Jennifer Graviet
First Vice Chair Brittney Cummins	Member Linda B. Hansen
Second Vice Chair Alisa Ellis	Member Carol Barlow Lear
Member Michelle Boulter	Member Kathleen Riebe
Member Lisa Cummins	Member Terryl Warner

**USDB Advisory Council Members Present:**

Chair Karen Harrop	Sundie Goulding
Jared Allebest	Sterling Hilton
Bill Clapp	Philippe Montalette

**USDB Executive Staff Present:**

Joel Coleman, Superintendent	Susan Patton (representing Associate Supt.
Michelle Tanner, Associate Supt.	Carolyn Lasater)
Carl Empey, Finance Director	

**Others Present:**

Karen Borg Susan Thomas, Tamara Flint—USDB staff; Susie Blackham—USDB Education Association; Sydnee Dickson, Scott Jones, Emilie Wheeler—USBE staff; Bryan Quesenberry—Attorney General’s Office; Amy Jaskowick; Andrea Rathbun, Cody Simonsen-- interpreters

**Call to Order and Introductions**

Chair Mark Huntsman called the meeting to order at 1:22 p.m. State Board of Education members and Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind Advisory Council members introduced themselves.

**USDB Consent Calendar**

**MOTION** was made by Member Ellis and seconded that the Board approve the USDB Consent Calendar.

Motion carried unanimously.

Consent Calendar

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes

The Board approved the minutes of the September 7, 2018 USDB Board meeting.

2. Grants Approval

The Board approved USDB reapplying for the U.S. Department of Education Deaf-Blind grant.

**Monthly Budget Report**

USDB Finance Director Carl Empey gave the budget status report comprised of income statement, statement of cash flows and statement of net position.

Fee Increases

Mr. Empey reviewed proposed fee increases. It was noted that the majority of the increases are for adults. He clarified that the \$500 fee for student travel is only used as a placeholder, and if the student does not cancel the fee is returned to the student; if a student cancels, a portion of the fee may be needed to cover costs that are not recoverable.

Superintendent Coleman informed that the only fees currently required of students are for student travel and \$100 for sports, and the fees are waivable. As there is not an increase in the sports fee, it is not on the list. Chair Huntsman requested that in the future all fees be included regardless of whether there is an increase. Superintendent Coleman also stated that USDB teachers do not charge fees.

**MOTION** was made by Member Riebe and seconded that the Board accept the fee schedule.

Motion carried unanimously.

### Carryforward Funding

Mr. Empey reviewed the \$4.2 million in excess revenue, broken down into three categories: Enrichment Funds, USIMAC, and USDB Carryforward. He reviewed the plans for use of the excess. The Enrichment Fund is funded from state trust lands money and the enrichment projects were previously approved by the Board. USIMAC had a balance of \$85,000 which has been spent on a scanning machine to scan Braille.

The carryforward balance for USDB is \$2.6 million. A plan for use of the carryforward was provided to the Board. Superintendent Coleman reported that part of the carryforward is earmarked for the Springville building project. Additional funding needed for the project will be requested by the state Division of Facilities and Construction Management in the upcoming legislative session. Landscaping and audiovisual will be delayed until the end of the project so the building can begin.

Mr. Empey informed that Board rule restricts the carryforward to five percent of the federal and state revenues. That amount comes to approximately \$1.9 million, and the carryforward for the agency is slightly above that amount. USBE Deputy Superintendent Scott Jones clarified that USDB is not in violation if the carryforward is higher, but must disclose the amount to the Board and provide a spend plan.

**MOTION** was made by Member Riebe and seconded that the Board approve the FY18 carryforward.

Motion carried unanimously.

**MOTION** was by Member B. Cummins and seconded that the Board approve the FY19 spend plans.

Motion carried unanimously.

### **2017-18 USDB Annual Report**

USDB Superintendent Joel Coleman presented the USDB Annual Report. The categories in the report are based on requirements in statute; in addition, the report includes information on services USDB provides that are not served by educators.

Associate Superintendent Michelle Tanner explained that the student outcomes reported come from students in USDB campus-based programs. The scores for students in outreach are reported by their districts. She acknowledged the majority of blind students statewide are opting out of SAGE statewide testing, mostly because of accessibility and the time it takes to finish the test, so there aren't good numbers for blind students. This is being addressed in the school improvement plan with the goal to provide more appropriate assessments for those students.

Superintendent Coleman announced that USDB has the top graduation rate in the country for deaf individuals.

Susan Patton, Director of Deaf-blind services, reported that next year blind students will be given the Galileo assessment, and it is hoped this will provide some longitudinal data for blind students.

### **School for the Deaf Strategic Plan**

Michelle Tanner, Associate Superintendent for the Deaf, discussed the School for the Deaf Strategic Plan. She reviewed the goals on which the school has been working and goals that have been added.

She reported that efforts are being made to close the division between two approaches to deaf education, and there have been both successes and struggles. Particular work is being done in the preschool programs to collaborate better as they are in the same building.

Superintendent Tanner reported on upcoming events including USDB hosting the national League of Innovative Schools. The school is also preparing a huge event called Biz Town, where other schools for the deaf can participate and a Junior Achievement mini city will be set up; that event will likely happen in June.

The Board heard from Advisory Council members on the issue of deaf education, and if there are definitive answers as to whether the oral approach or the American Sign Language (ASL) approach is best.

Advisory Council Member Jared Allebest, representing the deaf, stated that having students learn ASL does not hinder their ability to communicate with their parents. He suggested deaf children will have an innate sense on how they want to communicate and it is important and empowering for children to build their own sense of identity and to choose their own communication preference. There are many successful deaf people that use ASL and oral communication. It is the school's goal to allow freedom of choice.

Advisory Council Member Philippe Montalette spoke from his experience as a deaf child and experiences with his deaf child and deaf grandchildren. He indicated research has shown that teaching sign language first is more successful, and as the child grows, he will be able to learn to speak. He agreed that children need to decide their preference.

Advisory Council Member Sterling Hilton echoed the above comments. He shared that his daughter is deaf and blind and the family learned sign language prior to her getting a cochlear implant. The family still signs because that is easier in certain areas. Both avenues of communication are important.

Mr. Allebest added that parent participation is what most establishes success.

Superintendent Coleman shared that occasionally there are reports from parents that there are still a few educators who are trying to impose their philosophy of a certain communication mode. His staff is very sensitive to that and are making efforts to work with those professionals.

### **School for the Blind Strategic Plan**

Susan Patton, Director of Deaf-Blind Services, reported for Associate Superintendent Carolyn Lasater on the School for the Blind (USB) Strategic Plan, including current initiatives and future plans. She reported that teachers who will be participating in the Galileo assessment for the blind have been working very successfully with the reading clinic at the University of Utah.

New areas of improvement include the formation of a parent teacher association and hiring of an athletic director who will incorporate blinds students statewide into athletic opportunities. Students and parents are also more supported through social media.

### **Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent Coleman reported as follows:

- Gratitude was expressed for all the great people who work at USDB.
  - USDB's deaf-blind program is the best in the country, and is a model for others. The program just received a grant for another five years. He thanked Susan Patten for her incredible work.
  - The school has a new emphasis on media and communications with the priority to let parents know about resources.
  - Significant updates have been done to existing buildings including the school in Salt Lake and the Ogden campus.
  - The visit from League of Innovative Schools will take place in October. He invited State Board members to participate, particularly on October 11 at 9:00 a.m. in the Openshaw Building. Two busloads of superintendents will arrive that morning. There will be a performance by the deaf Shakespeare troop, and a dance from blind students.
  - As USDB continues to improve licensing, but there are still many inconsistencies regarding the areas where teachers are placed and the degrees they hold.
- Superintendent Coleman requested that whenever there is a group or task force looking at licensing, USDB representatives be included to look at those inconsistencies.

### **Adjournment**

Chair Huntsman thanked Superintendent Coleman and his staff for hosting the Board and thanked Advisory Committee members for their service.

**MOTION** was made by Member Riebe and seconded that the meeting adjourn. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 3:16 p.m.

Lorraine Austin, Board Secretary  
Minutes approved November 2, 2018