

**MEETING OF THE UTAH STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
ACTING AS THE GOVERNING BOARD FOR THE
UTAH SCHOOLS FOR THE DEAF AND THE BLIND**

June 7, 2019

A meeting of the Utah State Board of Education Acting as the Governing Board for the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind was held on June 7, 2019 at the Utah State Board of Education Building, 250 East 500 South, Salt Lake City, Utah. At the request of Chair Mark Huntsman, Vice Chair Brittney Cummins conducted.

Members Present:

Chair Mark Huntsman	Member Alisa Ellis
Vice Chair Brittney Cummins	Member Jennifer Graviet
Member Laura Belnap	Member Linda B. Hansen
Member Michelle Boulter (by phone)	Member Scott L. Hansen
Member Janet A. Cannon	Member Carol Barlow Lear
Member Lisa Cummins	Member Scott B. Neilson
Member Cindy Davis	Member Shawn E. Newell
Member Jennie Earl	

USDB Executive Staff Present:

Joel Coleman, Superintendent	Michelle Tanner, Associate Supt.
Carolyn Lasater, Associate Supt.	Carl Empey, Finance Director

Others Present:

Sarah Hill—5 Star Interpreting; Stephanie Morgan, Nathan Harrison, Aimee Breinholt, Karen Borg, Chad Hinds, Jennifer Salazar, Armando Venegas—USDB staff; Zoe Giles, Amber Lam, Anthony Claypool—Skyline High students; David Laycock—Division of Human Resources Management; Natalie Shaw, Jackie Ball, Jody Katz, Alisa Ensign—parents; Jayden Paulus; Scott Jones, Leah Voorhies, Lorraine Austin, Jerry Record, Debbie Davis—USBE staff

Vice Chair Brittney Cummins called the meeting to order at 10:46 a.m.

Public Comment

Alisa Ensign, parent – expressed that she is tired of hearing attacks on the USDB, reporting that most of the attacks are coming from people who aren't parents and aren't

specialized in deaf education and deaf children. She asked the Board to stop listening to these people and let USDB take care of parenting concerns.

Jody Katz, parent of USDB student – shared that it is important for the Board to know there are parents who are extremely happy with services at USDB. She has seen exponential increases in activities for her child. She is PTA president and hears from parents who are exceedingly happy.

Jackie Ball, parent of USDB student – expressed that each side has a valid point; there are plenty of parents that choose LSL-only [Listening and Spoken Language] that have not been satisfied with some of the services they receive at USDB. She thanked the Board for listening to parents and helping move the parent statement forward. She applauded the Utah School for the Deaf for providing a document that shows exactly what is being presented to parents. She asked that the language, “Students in LSL classrooms focus primarily on developing only auditory and verbal skills,” under the LSL Classrooms description in the modalities document be reworded to make it less limiting.

Michelle Draper, parent of USDB student – expressed support for the USDB, its administration and research-based individualized teaching methods. She informed that 70 percent of families choose the LSL method and every school in the state teaches using LSL. She noted that USDB is the only school that provides ASL [American Sign Language] direct instruction and the school also teaches LSL; she questioned who has the limited choice. She asked the Board to put its trust in the USDB Advisory Council and licensed professionals and that the Board not entertain any discussion that will limit a student or force professionals to go against their best practices.

Natalie Shaw, parent of USDB student – informed that on the USDB webpage titled, “Relevant Research,” there is nothing showing positive outcomes for LSL-only children, which is concerning because the most relevant studies have consistently shown deaf and hard of hearing children using LSL-only are on par with their hearing peers. Parents need to know this vital information. Also, some of the information provided is irrelevant because it was published decades ago or comes from Wikipedia. The videos, research and tone are all marketing material

for the bimodal option and impede parent choice. She asked the Board to empower parents to make informed decisions based on full, unfiltered, and unbiased representation.

Zoe Giles, Skyline High ASL President – expressed that she loves her deaf friends because of Skyline High. She voiced concern that possibly, because of a shortage of math teachers, an online math class will be the only math class provided for deaf students; if that is the case, her deaf friends wouldn't have the socialization they get at school. She stated that if there was a high school for deaf students only, their diplomas would be designated as "special education." She voiced that she loves the idea that deaf kids are the same as hearing kids and should have the same education and rights.

Amber Lam, former Skyline High student – pointed out that in H.B. 409 [Changes to the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind, 2019 Legislative Session], the wording that parents have a right to make the choice for their children is crossed out, and expressed that parents should have a right to decide what is best for their children. She voiced that deaf students' diplomas should not say "special education." She has heard many complaints from parents and students that they want their children to go to Skyline High so they can be immersed with hearing students. Deaf students should have the same communication access as hearing students, and she doesn't like the idea of separating them.

USDB Consent Calendar

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

Motion carried; Member Huntsman absent.

USDB CONSENT CALENDAR

3.1 Meeting Minutes

The Board approved the minutes of the May 3, 2019 USDB Board meeting.

3.2 Brakenwood Consulting Contract Amendment

The Board approved a contract over \$100,000 with Brakenwood Consulting LLC.

3.2 2019-2021 Negotiated Agreement

The Board approved the Negotiated Agreement between the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind and the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind Education Association.

Monthly Budget Report

Finance Director Carl Empey gave the financial report for month ending April 30, 2019 including donated funds and enrichment funds.

Mr. Empey requested information requested by the Board in its last meeting information on per pupil expenditures.

Blind/Visually Impaired Students Report on Canada Trip

Robbin Clark, Expanded Core Curriculum Director, introduced the blind and visually impaired students who participated in the USDB trip to Canada. The students gave a presentation, reporting what they took away from the trip, including becoming more independent, using apps for transportation, becoming more aware of their surroundings, learning more of the expanded core curriculum, and improving leadership and communication skills. They also visited the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, the W. Ross Macdonald School for the Blind, and the Jacques Ouellete School for the Blind.

The students thanked the teachers that traveled with them and the Board and USDB for providing the opportunity.

Associate Superintendent Carolyn Lasater also acknowledged the teachers and reported that the students were great ambassadors.

Core Curriculum (ECC) Presentation

Robbin Clark, Expanded Core Curriculum Director, made a presentation with highlights about the Expanded Core. She explained how the ECC comes together with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Parent Intake and Orientation Procedures

Superintendent Joel Coleman was joined by Stephanie Morgan, Parent Infant Program for the Deaf/Hard of Hearing (PIP) Director, Aimee Breinholt, Jean Massieu School Director, and Jennifer Salazar, LSL Director.

Superintendent Coleman presented information on modality and placement options for children at the Utah School for the Deaf. He indicated that USDB has to remain neutral and facilitate every family. Superintendent Coleman reviewed notes from an IEP [Individualized Education Plan] meeting that document what happens at the meeting; parents sign the document at every meeting and it is the official legal record. He also showed the USDB Modalities Fact Sheet that is intended to give parents a very clear view of what parents can choose and noted the recently developed Utah School for the Deaf Placement and Language Modality Options.

Superintendent Coleman informed that there are USDB policies in place that require staff to be unbiased and neutral while still allowing them to give professional opinions during the process. He and his staff have not found any evidence that USDB has been demonstrating any bias in placement of students.

Superintendent Coleman addressed some of the statements made in public comment. He directed his staff to review the LSL research on the website. He informed that USDB is developing online courses for students in all modalities, including math. Teachers are developing their own curriculum and will put all resources in the Canvas online system. He also clarified that a USDB diploma has the name of the school, but there is no “special education” designation.

Superintendent’s Report

Superintendent Coleman reported the following.

- The student travel USDB facilitates provides great opportunities for the students. The teachers that accompany the students aren’t out front but facilitate the student experience.

- The USDB Opening Institute will be held August 16. Board members were invited to the Institute.
- USDB teachers received a ten percent increase this year. The negotiation process with the USDB Teachers Association was very collaborative and a good experience.

Executive Session

MOTION was made by Member Belnap and seconded that the Board go into an Executive Session to discuss pending or reasonably imminent litigation.

Upon voice vote of Members Belnap, Cannon, B. Cummins, L. Cummins, Earl, Ellis, Graviet, L. Hansen, S. Hansen, Lear, Neilson and Newell, the Board went into closed Executive Session at 1:40 p.m.

Those present included the members above, Sydnee Dickson and Lorraine Austin.

MOTION was made by Member Earl and seconded that the Board come out of Executive Session.

Motion carried. The Board reconvened in open meeting at 12:55 p.m.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:56 p.m.

Lorraine Austin, Board Secretary
Minutes approved August 2, 2019