

**WASHINGTON STATE SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Minutes from Board of Trustees Meeting
September 19-20, 2008
Vancouver, Washington

Board Members Participating: Denise Colley, Chuck Nelson, Jim Kemp, John Driscoll, Sherry Perry, Annabelle Fitts, and Kay Adamson.

Board Members Absent: Steve Rainey

Ex-Officio Members Participating: Berl Colley (Washington Council of the Blind), Paul Baldwin (Teachers Association), Michael Freeman (National Federation of the Blind of Washington), Bonda Albers (Washington Federation of State Employees Local #1225), and Jean Curtis (Parent Representative).

WSSB Staff Members Participating: Dr. Dean Stenehjem (Superintendent), Jessica Sydnor (Human Resources Manager), Craig Meador (Director of On-Campus), Renee Corso (Associate Principal-After School and Evening Programs), Mary Sarate (Business Manager), Dee Amundsen (Director of Outreach), Sherry Hahn (Digital Learning Coordinator), Rob Tracey (Plant Manager), and Janet Merz (recording secretary).

Guests: Gary Lay, John Lay and John's son.

September 19, 2008 - 7:00-9:15 pm

Denise called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Department Updates:

- ✚ Dee Amundsen, Outreach. Dee reported the following:
 - An interview will be held for a dual certified position in the Bremerton area (filling a recent vacancy). Dee will be shifting Outreach teachers so that conservation of gas and mileage can be maximized.
 - Transcriber services were added for the Elma School District.
 - A retired Orientation and Mobility (O&M) Specialist will be contacted to see if she can serve a student in Washougal. WSSB would help facilitate this, but this would result in a direct contract situation with the Washougal School District and the former O&M Instructor. Also, Dee is serving one student in the Cathlamet schools.
 - Catherine Golding is very excited about recruiting TVI's and will be present at Career Fairs. Catherine is trying to help create a pool of future TVI's on the eastside of the state which has had a difficult time with recruitment and retention.
 - Dee is on the Ed Reform Committee with Sherry Hahn. Dee will also be on the Professional Education Standards Board to help determine what standards should be for certification for TVI's.
 - ESD 105 and ESD 123 lost some of their services to blind and visually impaired students due to departure of TVI's and extended leave situations .
 - Chuck asked if COMS (Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists) was a special certification. Dee stated it was a certification that is obtained through Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of Blind and Visually Impaired (AER). ACVREP is the accrediting component associated with AER.

- ✚ Jessica Sydnor, Human Resources. Jess reported the following:
 - WSSB hired two new employees at the beginning of the school year. Sean McCormick, TVI and Cathlene Cover, RN. Both employees are doing an excellent job.
 - WSSB is an exception agency under the hire freeze imposed by Olympia. WSSB can hire safety-related positions.

- ✚ Craig Meador, Education. Craig reported the following
 - Craig stated that the students are relating very well to Mr. McCormick. Mr. McCormick was offered a position by two other schools for the blind and he chose WSSB.

- WSSB will be hosting: two practicum students from Portland State University, three O&M students who are currently at the Guide Dogs for the Blind, and Northern Illinois also asked if we could work with a practicum student (O&M/TVI).
 - Enrollment is up this year (68 students) with an additional 3-4 who are in the application process. The senior class is unusually large. Craig feels the teachers are doing an excellent job.
 - The first pilot Short Course is taking off in November. Craig and Karen Mowry (Associate Principal-Education) are discussing media options to get the information out to TVI's.
 - Craig reviewed the NRCYS (National Resource Center for Youth Services) program. Staff obtained 40 hours of training under this model. (The focus of the training is provide staff with skills to work with students under the concept of a culture of caring, which emphasizes staff to staff and staff to student interaction to promote positive outcomes.) WSSB is the first school to have all employees go through the four components of training. Bonda said she has seen a difference with increased communication occurring between teachers and the residential department. Kay asked if they are noticing students monitoring themselves in a positive way and if they are reminding each other about proper behavior. Bonda said yes.
 - Annabelle asked if there is a current TVI list. Craig said that Colleen Lines, BAC/IRC Manager would have the most current information. Annabelle felt this would be a good resource for Short Course information.
- ✚ Renee Corso, Associate Principal-After School and Evening Programs. Renee reported the following:
- Renee has been working on changes to WSSB's Safety Plan in response to Senate Bill 5097. Renee attended a Safe School Task Force Summit regarding this and has until October 15 to submit our updated Safety Plan. The four major components are: prevention, intervention, all hazards approach to crisis, and after recovery. The plan has changed to incorporate one lockdown, one shelter in place, and one drill each year involving our mapping system (Rapid Responder). WSSB needs to consider how our facilities might be used by the community in a disaster situation. WSSB will request emergency services (fire and police department) to review our plan and encourage them to participate in one drill per year. SB 5097 requires that Principals be certified in the Incident Command System. Chuck asked if the Board could receive a copy of the plan once it is submitted. Dr. Stenehjem said yes.
 - The Rapid Responder is an information mapping system/database, with data entry that provides instant information to emergency responders. Components are: aerial and exterior photographs, best access routes to campus from various locations, floor plans, facility shut off for utilities, incident response plan, hazardous material locations, and also containment and family reunification locations. Janet is also going to be certified in this.
 - WSSB is part of the Safe School Task Force which is a group of representatives from school districts in SW Washington. They are an advisory committee to the board of superintendents.
 - Renee wanted to congratulate Jim Eccles for being chosen as Residential Life Counselor of the year through the Council of Schools for the Blind (COSB). Jim will receive the national award and recognition in Louisville, Kentucky in October.
- ✚ Sherry Hahn, Digital/Distance Learning Coordinator. Sherry reported the following:
- Sherry is a part of the statewide Education Reform Committee. They are in the process of arranging a meeting with Rep. Deb Wallace to work with them to submit a bill for endorsement for TVI's. Portland State University (PSU) and Washington State University (WSU) are working with the committee. The committee is looking at requesting PSU to provide the TVI component, and WSU to provide the O&M component. The universities would have an exchange program so students move between programs.
 - Video Clips on Blindness Tips has two new productions: making a bed and folding clothes. Sherry just finished working with a new contractor who filmed a full day in the kitchen with Becky Sherman, DSB. This will provide four new productions. Sherry is working with Nancy Hatfield, Washington Sensory Disability Services (WSDS) to produce a video regarding the birth-three age range.
 - Nancy Hatfield, WSDS submitted a grant for "Baby Jamboree". If granted this program would enable families to bring their children to WSSB's campus for training which would include segments on

sibling relationships, etc. This would be a partnership program with WSDS, DSB and WSSB. Sherry Perry brought this grant opportunity to our attention. Dee and Sherry are going to apply for a similar grant next year regarding prosthetic eyes.

- Murdock will be visiting WSSB for a site review in November to consider a grant for \$500,000 to go towards development of online learning in Math and Science and establishment of systems and guidelines/standards for accessible/usable online learning.
- One WSSB student has signed up for Distance Learning for French 1 this semester. Sherry is adapting everything into Moodle and Renee Corso is helping the student as she is fluent in French.
- Chuck asked about the training sessions (25) that are being provided. Sherry stated these are in partnership with Texas School for the Blind, including: 20 hours of braille refreshers, Abacus I and II, two Nemeth classes, Bookshare, HumanWare (GPS), IntelliTools, etc.
- The Assistive Tech Summit was held last summer. The summit was filled to over capacity.
- Six students will be participating in the Senior Technology project this year through the Washington School for the Blind Foundation (WSBF). WSBF funds senior student's tech wishes.
- Sherry stated that before the fiscal year ended all computer towers were replaced in the Assistive Technology and Science Lab. Also, flat panel monitors were replaced in the cottages.
- Annabelle asked how TVI's receive training information. Sherry uses the TOVI listserv, Colleen Lines' email list, ESD listserv, WSSB's website and also COSB's email list. Craig said he would like to start doing personal calls to TVI's. Kay and Annabelle offered to help do this. Career Fairs are a great way to get information out. Annabelle felt that retired TVI's would volunteer to attend and help out at career fairs.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Stenehjem reviewed the following:

- Two Board of Trustees positions are open, Congressional District 1 and 8. Kay will be serving on the board until her position is filled. Jim asked if they know someone should they submit a name. Dr. Stenehjem said yes, they should contact Stacy Tichenor, Governor's office at 360-902-4109.
 - Dr. Stenehjem is working with the code revisers office to draft a bill regarding the transfer of leave from school districts to WSSB (or the Washington School for the Deaf).
 - Chuck asked about the design of the new PE building that will help control public access to WSSB. Dr. Stenehjem stated that the design of the new building there will be a "WSSB entrance". This will include an overhang and walkway from the new PE building to Irwin. Nine additional cameras will be added. Chuck asked if there is a monitoring station. Dr. Stenehjem said it is in Rob Tracey's office. Once WSSB is on a web based system, we may be able to work with Clark Community College to watch our campus through the web based camera system.
 - Dr. Stenehjem stated that Yang Su Cho from DSB held an event where 12 students from 5 different schools in Korea came to Washington. Dr. Stenehjem was invited to talk to the students. Dr. Stenehjem said the students were delightful and felt this may open the opportunity for a student exchange program. Kay and Annabelle were able to participate in a recreational opportunity.
 - The Sensory Safari's grand opening was September 5. Nov Gnik, artist of the mural and the Mayor of Vancouver (Royce Pollard) were the ribbon cutters for the ceremony. Dr. Stenehjem also had visual simulators so that the community could see what Nov sees when he paints. Dr. Stenehjem stated that Barbara Sheldon, Executive Director did an excellent job of putting together the function.
- ✚ Strategic Plan Review (Dr. Stenehjem reviewed the slides listed within the minutes):
- Chuck asked about the K-3 program request. Dr. Stenehjem stated that there has been an increase in requests for K-3 services. This may also be tied to the preschool program success.
 - On Tuesday, September 23 the hearing regarding TRI money will be heard in Olympia.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.

September 20 - 8:00 am - 12:00 pm

Denise called the meeting to order at 8:10 a.m.

Business Meeting:

✚ Facility Tour—Update (Rob Tracey, Facility Manager)

- Chuck asked about the miles that were driven as submitted in Rob's report. Rob explained that "campus miles" were for employees who attend meetings, etc. in Olympia. Chuck asked if Catherine Golding's driver was a paid position. Dr. Stenehjem stated that a stipend is given to employees who then pay their drivers under reasonable accommodation.
- Bonda stated that Rob assisted a student with an accessibility issue concerning his cell phone (built a cradle device that allowed better one hand use. This made a huge difference for this student.
- Rob took the Board of Trustees and Ex Officios on a tour of the campus.

Open Forum

Denise invited Gary Lay to address the Board. Gary read his statement and will email a copy to Janet Merz.

Old Business:

- ✚ Approval of June 13, 2008 Meeting Minutes. Chuck moved to approve the minutes as submitted. Jim seconded the motion. The board approved the minutes unanimously.
- ✚ Committees. The committees for 2008-2009 are as follows:
 - Management: Steve Rainey, Chair. Members: Chuck Nelson, Sherry Perry, Jim Kemp, and Kay Adamson.
 - Education: Mike Freeman, Chair. Members: Annabelle Fitts, Jean Marie Curtis, and Bonda Albers.
 - Mike asked if the committee covers on campus and outreach. Denise said yes, the committee works with Craig Meador and Dee Amundsen closely to determine issues and/or needs.
 - Legislative: Berl Colley, Chair. Members: Chuck Nelson, John Driscoll, Mike Freeman, and Kay Adamson.
 - Dr. Stenehjem stated the two major issues this year will be: Agency legislation for leave transfer and certification and teacher prep program. In addition, the WASA/WSSDA Legislative Conf. will be held February 8-9, 2009.
 - Berl asked if we incorporate federal activity as well as state. Dr. Stenehjem said yes and if there are issues the Board would like to address that Dr. Stenehjem talks to the Governor's office regarding these first.
 - Buildings & Grounds: Jim Kemp, Chair. Members: Sherry Perry, Berl Colley, and Paul Baldwin.

New Business:

- ✚ Department Update/Budget Workshop (Mary Sarate, Business Manager).
 - Chuck asked about the \$20,000 self insurance. Mary said that we had a \$20,000 negative decision package because the premiums are less due to our good loss history.
 - Chuck asked about the Independent Living Cottage costing \$3,000,000. Dr. Stenehjem stated that cost is based upon square footage and rates that are tied to public works projects that pay at prevailing wage standards. Chuck asked how many students would be housed there. Dr. Stenehjem stated between 10-12 students.
 - Sherry asked what the General Campus Preservation fund was. These are funds appropriated by the legislature to help maintain the campus in good condition and are based upon a 10 year projects of life cycle on a wide variety of needs such as: roof/floor replacement, paving, painting, energy management, safety related issues, etc.
 - Annabelle asked about merit increases. Mary stated that staff are given increases based on a grade and range level and staff are moved up each year accordingly.
 - Annabelle asked what would happen if the TRI lawsuit is passed. Dr. Stenehjem stated it would have to go through the legislature. Dr. Stenehjem stated that since WSSB could not legally provide TRI we have tried to provide other incentives in lieu of TRI days, i.e. exchange days as agreed upon by the Principal, additional days as agreed upon with teachers, etc. and if the TRI lawsuit is approved by the courts it will be difficult to determine a financial piece because of other accommodations and agreements as previously discussed.
 - Dr. Stenehjem stated that an admin. meeting is scheduled to discuss budget issues; if it comes to reductions how WSSB could handle this situation with the least impact to students. Under the state constitution, basic education is a paramount duty and there is some budget protection. Basic

education is defined under the Doran decision to include special education as defined by the child's IEP. Dr. Stenehjem stated that it is important to have Individualized Education Plan written in a 24-hour format, since this is the type of program and service that are operated at WSSB and have shown to make a substantial difference for students.

- Chuck asked about the Performance Measures regarding students served regionally. Mary stated that is referring to the Eastside Regional Program. Chuck asked how many students Catherine serves on the eastside. Mary stated she served 43. Dr. Stenehjem feels WSSB needs to do a better job of explaining how many blind and visually impaired people Catherine impacts. Catherine is trying to make inroads with the migrant community and has been doing a tremendous amount of training with those working with the blind which is having a much larger impact than the number she has reported.
- Sherry asked why we were looking at 2 FTE's for the Kindergarten-3 program. Dr. Stenehjem stated that many times WSSB has combined classrooms and based upon the anticipated number of students will probably need two personnel in this area.
- Jim asked how many full time FTE's WSSB has. Mary stated 86.
- Mary added to the supplemental piece a request for funds for teacher increases (5.13%); .73% above what the state has funded. Mary contacted our budget analyst and was advised that WSSB should submit a request for these funds.
- Chuck complimented Mary on her report.

Budget Workshop (Mary Sarate):

- Mary stated that the funding for WSSB is broke out into:
 - Residential 21%, Education 39%, Outreach 13%, Administration 14%, Buildings and grounds 6%, Technology 5%, Safety Training 1%, and Braille Transcription 1%.
- The BAC and IRC are funded separately. The IRC is funded through North Central ESD through a flow through grant from OSPI and is not part of state budget, however the state must authorize WSSB to expend the funds.
- Outreach services (TVI and O&M) bills and collects approximately \$1.4 million for services. Dr. Stenehjem stated that if we receive a budget reduction, Olympia would be looking at state general funds not outreach funding which is revenue we generate to operate this program from contracts with local districts. Mary reported that Outreach is not totally self sufficient, as some state dollars supplement the program. This is due to the fact that the Director of Outreach and .5 FTE of WSSB's Assistive Technology Instructor are charged to the Outreach cost center. The cost to operate Outreach is \$780,000 and are slated to collect \$665,000 (17% deficit). WSSB increased our rates by 6%, but it is still not enough to run the program. Outreach decreased their costs by 4.5% with contracts going down.
- Mary stated WSSB is anticipating costs to be approximately \$6,857,239 and WSSB anticipates only \$6,794,715 in revenues.
- WSSB collects approximately \$130,000 in cost recoveries in facility rentals (Police Department, Southwest Childcare Consortium, DSB, etc.), even with that we are going to be at \$63,000 deficit that we need to reduce. WSSB already cut \$140,000 in intermittents and technology. The difficulty in making reductions is 81% of our budget is personnel, and 80% of the remaining is recurring costs.
- To cut costs, WSSB will reduce Residential intermittent costs by 56%, and Education intermittent costs by 71%. Mary stated we can make these cuts on paper, but realistically we are not sure if they can be maintained. At this time, short courses are dependent on intermittent teachers.
- Mary stated all state agencies received notification that there is a freeze on equipment, travel, and hiring. WSSB received a letter on September 18, from the Office of Financial Management (OFM), stating the state is anticipating a \$200 million shortfall.
- John asked about WSSB working a four-day work week. Dr. Stenehjem stated it may impact schools that we work with and would also impact transportation. This would have a negative impact on parents if WSSB sent students home early Friday mornings. Dr. Stenehjem stated that during the summer employees can opt to work a four day, 10 hour work week.

- Mary stated WSSB submitted a budget for weekend transportation. OFM requested information regarding keeping students on campus three weekends per month. Mary calculated this and the cost would be an additional \$9,000 per month.
- Mary stated that the \$63,000 that is needed to balance the budget is dependent on successful funding of \$43,000 through Safety Net. Two additional high needs students have enrolled, therefore we will be applying for \$80,000.
- Capital Budget:
 - Mary stated there have been a lot of building issues with Kennedy. There is \$157,000 set aside for change orders and WSSB received a \$38,000 change order on Sept. 19. Dr. Stenehjem stated that \$650,000 of additional soil work was billed before the project even started, which had a major impact on the project. If you eliminated the soil issues which should have been in the project design, the total change orders to this date would be in the 2+% category, which would not be that bad, but the soil issues have really complicated the project.
 - Bonda asked Mary if the WFSE Collective Bargaining agreement regarding two additional personal days and increases were approved. Mary said she had not heard.
- Supplemental budget requests are due in October. WSSB will be submitting a few based upon major review of our budget and discussions with Olympia.

Ex-Officio's Reports

- ✚ Washington Council of the Blind (WCB): Berl Colley.
 - Last summer, the WCB National Convention was held in Louisville, KY with 37 members attending. At that meeting, Berl was nominated for a board position. Berl was in Vancouver August 1-2 for the WCB summer board meeting. Sherry Hahn and Craig Meador attended to talk about WSSB updates, distance learning projects, etc. WCB's Fall Convention (Hilton Hotel, Vancouver) will be held October 23-25 with tours of WSSB. The weekend after the Convention the western leadership training will be held at the Hilton Hotel (last weekend in October).
- ✚ National Federation of the Blind (NFB): Michael Freeman.
 - The NFB held their National Convention after the June WSSB Board meeting. Michael was elected President of the diabetes action network. The NFB state convention will be held Oct. 31-Nov. 2 at the Holiday Inn, Downtown Everett. There will be a student seminar during the conference. Dr. Lone Fine from the University of Washington will speak to the members regarding her study of the different areas of brain that are active in blind people. Jamie Baggett, Phil Hatlen, and agency directors (including Dr. Stenehjem) are going to be speaking at the convention. Dan Frye will be the National Rep. Mike invited all to attend; the cost is \$86.00 per night. Registration is \$65.00 if by October 15 otherwise \$70.00 (banquet and Friday night meal included).
- ✚ Teachers: Paul Baldwin.
 - Paul stated that he and Judy Koch-Smith participated in contract negotiations last summer. Paul complimented Jess as their negotiation team was impressed with her and how well they all worked together. The teachers were able to get a pre-service day added to the contract for next year so they can spend a day getting rooms set up and lesson plans done. The teachers are thankful for that. Early release days are scheduled on some Thursday's so that RLC's can participate in the IEP process. The RLC's are getting training on IEP online. Paul reported that teachers are very positive this year. The teachers are trying to fill in for staff so that intermittents aren't needed all the time. Paul remarked that there is a great change in student attitude with the new "PRIDE" program. This year, Paul has 9 students in his Biology class, and 7 students in his Physical Science class.
- ✚ WSFE Local #1225: Bonda Albers.
 - Bonda stated that the Local 1225 will hold elections for officers in November. Bonda would like to continue her role as Vice President. The Collective Bargaining sessions concluded last Thursday. Bonda stated that a committee was formed to discuss the possibility of bringing back the 12-month pay. Bonda felt at first management was against it, but once they realized its been three years since employees have had the 12-month pay option, and that members are using vacation leave to pay for

insurance during the holidays; management had a better understanding. Due to this, a memorandum of understanding was created with the following details: the committee will meet from October 1-December 31 (extended if needed), committee will be made up of WSD and WSSB management reps (four), union reps (four), OFM rep (1), Labor Relations and also WFSE may also attend the meetings. Subject matter experts may also attend. The committee will meet minimum of two times. The issue stems from the state computer system's inability to pay hourly employees over a 12-month pay period. Starting in October, the WFSE will be holding three meetings, instead of one, affording everyone the opportunity to attend. Dr. Stenehjem stated WSSB would like to be able to pay the employees over a 12-month pay period, however it is uncertain who would bear the cost to reprogram the state computer system and that both sides want to make it happen.

- + Parent Representative: Jean Marie Curtis.
 - o Jean has been forwarding information to the listserv and sending out information trying to get more involvement.

Miscellaneous

- + Bonda wanted to thank everyone for supporting the powerlifters through the candle fundraiser.
- + Berl reported that there are books that were donated to WSSB. The books need to be restored into a digital format to preserve them. At this time, 13 books have been converted. The space for storage was lost this year due to the school's need to use it for their physical education program. Berl has made contact with someone who has submitted a bid to convert digital recordings into something that is a lot more understandable. Berl will be submitting a grant to the WSBF.

Washington School for the Blind Foundation (Barbara Sheldon, Executive Director)

- + Barbara stated the Sensory Safari is a one of a kind in America. Barbara stated that the audio, braille, large print, and pictures make the room a full functioning classroom. The Mississippi Children's Museum called to get advice on how to incorporate a similar museum. A film crew will be coming on September 30 to film students in the Sensory Safari. The film will then be posted on the SCI website. The animals in the displays will be changed intermittently. The audio portion of the safari room cost \$60,000 (not including braille and headphones). The Clark County Fair contacted Barbara to see if they could borrow our exhibits and or arrange for some type of exhibit at the Clark Co. Fair.
- + The Foundation is working on a capacity building endowment campaign. The goal is to raise \$3,000,000. The Foundation is approaching donors to obtain a climbing wall, physical fitness equipment, etc. This is a back up plan in case we are not able to secure these through state appropriations.
- + The Foundation would like to be able to provide funds for all seniors statewide for assistive technology. This year, there are 81 seniors across the state. We know that this will be a few years off unless the foundation can generate the needed funds.
- + A grant for \$10,000 was received from First Independent Bank. The funds are set aside for the braille book program which will provide funding to bring in current titles into the library (all grade levels).
- + The Foundation is looking at options the Louis Braille birthday celebration. The commemorative coin cost \$40.00 each and a local bank is willing to purchase up to \$250.00 worth.
- + A breakfast is being planned for the WSBF's donors as a thank you.
- + The WSBF board nominated Bill Craig as new President of the Board of Directors.
- + Dr. Stenehjem stated that we are looking at the Seattle to Portland bike ride, trying to get tandem teams with blind students; with someone do an audio play by play. WSSB has two bicycle clubs that work with us currently in recreation.
- + Larry Holzman, attorney in Vancouver, donated \$10,000, and pledged up to \$50,000 for orthodontic care for our students.
- + Annabelle asked if we have connected with the Children's Museum in Portland.
- + Barbara said they are working on maintaining an open time frame per week to have classrooms come in. Barbara will let the Board know when it is open to the public. Barbara said she could provide tours.

The regular meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m. Denise called an Executive Session.

Executive Session

An executive session was called to order and adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m. The next Board meeting will be held in Vancouver on November 14-15, 2008.

Denise Colley, Chair

Dean O. Stenehjelm, Ed.D.
Superintendent

**Board Reports
September 2008**

Business Office

1. 2007-09 Budget
 - a. Operating: We closed the year with a zero balance. Our carry forward for private/local funds is approximately \$225,018 which will be used towards costs overruns on the gym. I will be providing more departmental detail at the budget workshop on Sept. 20, 2008.
 - b. Supplemental Budgets: Due mid October, 2008. We will be submitting supplemental budgets for utilities and weekend transportation.

2. 2009-11 Operating Budget: We submitted our budget on time. The following decision packages were submitted:

- Short Course \$271,000 and 2 FTEs
- Kindergarten to three \$244,000 and 2 FTEs
- Teacher Recruitment \$ 82,000
- Weekend Transportation \$ 83,000
- Merit Increases \$126,000
- Self Insurance (\$20,000)

I will be providing more detail at our budget workshop on how our carry forward budget of \$14,069,000 will be allotted.

3. 2009-11 Capital Budget: The following decision packages were submitted:

- Independent Living Cottage \$3,046,000
- Campus Preservation \$ 770,000

4. Performance Measures for 2009-11

Percentage of students transitioned to employment or post secondary prog.	90%
Percentage of WSSB students who demonstrate 1.5 yrs growth in the first academic year.	80%
Number of teachers/paraprofessionals and others working with the blind on specialized skill development.	800 per Qtr
Number of teachers/paraprofessionals taking the Braille Literacy Usage Exam.	Qtr1-2; Qtr2-3; Qtr3-4; Qtr4-4
Percentage of Braille transcription delivered to customers on time.	99%
Number of pages brailled per quarter.	Qtr1-200,000 Qtr2-100,000 Qtr3 -80,000 Qtr4 -98,000

Percentage increase in students served regionally.	20%
Number of students receiving an education on-campus.	1Qtr-50; 2Qtr-64, 3Qtr-70; 4Qtr-70
Students served through off-campus (outreach)	500 per Qtr
Districts receiving services from WSSB will rate the service 4.0 or higher with 5 being the highest possible rating.	90%

5. Safety Net: We will once again be applying for funding for four high needs students, totaling approximately \$80,000. Balancing our budget is dependent on us receiving this funding. We will be applying early so as to be prepared to make additional cuts if not successful. The admin team will have a planning session on September 30 to develop a reduction plan.

Buildings and Grounds

- Capital construction continues around campus. A general overview of the projects include the:
 - **Gym:** The pool has been poured, walls set, skylights and roof are being set
 - **Bio-swale:** Work will be continuing for the next month or more. Work to include, sidewalks, plants, irrigation system installation and testing.
 - **Safari room:** Total revamp of basement entry from east ramp. New carpet, shelf work, walled in electrical and alarm boxes, lighting, painting.
 - Complications due to construction include water rights issues with the campus irrigation well and interference with a main steam line feeding the cottages and Old Main. Both of these problems have been resolved and we are currently implementing the engineered solutions.
- We hired Jake Koch over the summer to help with campus maintenance projects. Jake is currently the R.A. for the LIFTT program and was a student assistant on the third floor last school year. Jake was able to paint all of the fire lines, various hand rails and support posts on campus as well as pressure wash sidewalks, steps and walls. He was a tremendous help in keeping the campus clean and presentable with an on going construction project stirring up continuous dust clouds.
- We have benefited again from a Boy Scout Eagle Project. One boy led his Troop in grading, forming and pouring the concrete floor for a future expansion of the greenhouse. The pad will allow for more than doubling of the greenhouse and will allow for better student involvement.
- We conducted safety training at the start of the school year which included information on the types of fires, identification of the proper fire extinguisher to use on specific fires and the hands- on use of putting out a fire.
- Energy use was shared with staff in an effort to explain the current need to conserve resources and funding for the current school year. The basic information included the following data:
 1. Miles traveled: Outreach 165,855, Campus 104,662: Total 270,517 (more than 1 way to the moon)
 2. Kilowatts used – over 1 million or enough to power 93 homes for a year.
 3. Natural gas used – over 80,000 therms or \$92,000 (without pool ½ of year)

On Campus

We anticipate that the 2008-2009 school year will be very memorable. We look forward to the new gym being completed and our first round of piloting the short course programs.

Our focus for the school year is Lion's P.R.I.D.E . PRIDE is an acronym that stands for

- Positive

- Respectful and Responsible
- Independent
- Dependable
- Engaged

This is our school's common language. This language is shared throughout the residential and educational programs. All classroom and cottage rules are structured around PRIDE. The beauty of a common language is that students know what is expected of them and can redirect their behaviors when prompted to align with PRIDE. We are using our Friday assemblies to discuss the different aspects of being PRIDE students at WSSB.

We have completed the National Resource Center for Youth Services, residential workers program. This was a forty-hour training module that addressed meeting the needs of students in a residential setting. Topics included: understanding different learners, student safety, discipline and developing a culture of care.

All schools are required to update their safety and emergency plans for the state. These are due October 15th. In addition, school administrators are required to complete the FEMA training and become certified. This is a fairly easy process and Craig and Renee have completed the certification.

Student numbers: Our school numbers are up. We began the year with 17 new students for a total of 68 students. We have several requests for evaluation pending.

We hired a new teacher. Sean McCormick is a recent graduate from Portland State University. He completed his training at the Texas School for the Blind. Sean will be teaching math concepts, health, Braille and social skills.

Outreach

Itinerant Teacher Program

We are starting the year with 31 Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVI) contracts and 18 Orientation and Mobility (O&M) contracts. We currently have an open position to be housed somewhere in the Bremerton area. Although we were not able to replace Brenda Foster north of Seattle, I was able to find TVIs that privately contract to provide services in the districts vacated by Brenda and not served through Outreach. There are still many positions open in the state. Our on-campus enrollment has increased substantially and I think that the teacher shortage in the state is driving our on-campus numbers up.

Outreach teachers had their two Education Reform days and these were spent visiting the Washington Talking Book and Braille Library, the Lighthouse for the Blind and the Orientation and Training Center, all of which are located in Seattle.

Lions Low Vision Clinic

Over the summer, Dr. John Smith was promoted to Assistant Dean at the Pacific University College of Optometry. Due to that change, Dr. Christi Closson was chosen to fill Dr. Smith's position in the Low Vision Clinic here on campus. Listed below is a small bio, written by Dr. Smith:

"I am very excited and pleased to announce that as of August 15, Christi Closson, OD will be our new Chief of Low Vision Services. Within that role she will serve as the Director of the Lions Low Vision Clinic at WSSB. Dr. Closson currently is a clinical attending at the College, serving in our Primary Care, Low Vision, and Ocular Disease Clinics. She received her Doctor of Optometry degree from Southern California College of Optometry and completed a Primary Care and Hospital Based Optometry residency at W.W. Hastings Health Hospital in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. Prior to coming to Pacific Dr. Closson spent five years at Devers Eye Institute in Portland in the Ocular Disease clinic and was the Director of Low Vision Rehabilitation. I am sure you will find Dr. Closson to be an exceptional addition to the clinic."

Summer Institute for Educators

This year's event was a huge success! Typically we have around 28-30 participants; this year we had 53 registered participants with a waiting list of five! Thanks to a grant from the Gibney Family Foundation we

were able to offer 15 \$150 scholarships to participants, reduce the overall participant fee by \$50, and provide participants with two critical textbooks in addition to our usual week of intense instruction and fun. This year we had participants from Washington, Idaho, California, Oregon, North Dakota and British Columbia. Participant evaluations give the Institute a rating of 4.85 out of 5.

Instructional Resource Center (IRC)/Braille Access Center (BAC)

Federal Quota Funds are distributed to IRCs through the American Printing House for the Blind, based on the student census. The IRC is charged with prudent spending of these funds for accessible materials for students with visual impairments. The IRC distributed over \$200,000 worth of accessible materials to districts for use with their students that are blind and visually impaired.

Washington has 993 legally blind students registered with APH and an additional 443 visually impaired/print disabled students registered with the IRC for services for a total of 1436 registered students. The IRC shipped a total of 5729 accessible materials and equipment for students with visual impairments for the period of September 1, 2007 through July 30, 2008. An additional 319 items were shipped to ESDs, Out-of-State IRCs, and WSSB for a grand total of 6048 accessible media items shipped.

The IRC has been participating in a cooperative interstate loan service through a national listserv to borrow and loan books that local LEAs would otherwise have to purchase. We loaned 53 textbooks to out-of-state IRCs. In return we were able to borrow 41 textbooks in alternate formats from other states. The average cost per alternate textbook at \$600 saved the state \$24,600.

We continue to see increases in the requests for alternate format materials that are not available for loan or purchase elsewhere. Since September 1, 2007 we have completed or have in the transcription process through the BAC 105 Braille texts. The demand for large print textbooks remains steady. We have delivered requested materials in a timely manner 99% of the time.

Human Resources

Fall Workshop/Safety Training:

This year's training went very well. We finished the two year NRCYS Residential Child and Youth Care Professional Curriculum. Training was provided by Jean Carpenter-Williams from the University of Oklahoma. Our employees really seem to enjoy Jean as speaker and the concepts on developing a *Culture of Care* were generally well received. We also had a speaker from Child Protective Services come to provide us with a mandatory reporting refresher. Craig Meador, Karen Mowry, Rob Tracey, our health center staff and I provided some additional training on professional conduct policies, fire extinguisher use, Bloodborne Pathogens, and ethics rules.

Recruitment:

As you may be aware, the Governor's office has issued a state-wide hiring freeze. WSSB has been listed as an exemption agency, however, only direct service and critical to fill/safety sensitive positions meet the criteria for exception. We were able to fill two important positions this summer.

Sean McCormick is our new on-campus teacher. Sean, originally hailing from the state of New York, received his Master of Science in Special Education from Portland State University and is very close to having the all requirements filled for a math endorsement. This will be extremely helpful to WSSB as JoAnn Gatley is currently planning her retirement this upcoming summer. I had an opportunity to briefly visit his classroom recently and he seems to have been able to hit the ground running. His students were engaged and having a good time.

Cathlene Cover is our new Registered Nurse 1 in the health center. She came to us from Arizona and has extensive experience working in pediatrics and infant care, including working with children with autism, congenital defects, learning disabilities and moderate to severe behavioral issues. Although Cathleen has not had much experience working with the blind and visually impaired, she is acclimating quickly and her supervisor is very pleased with her progress. We are very excited to welcome both of these employees.

We currently have three positions that would be very helpful to fill. One position is the Outreach TVI/O&M (COMS preferred) position. We have one candidate currently that looks very promising. This teacher has the COMS certification we are looking for and the experience to successfully work independently, which is ideal for Outreach positions. The candidate will be coming in for an interview sometime in October. The second position to fill is the Secretary Senior position for our front desk. We have received over 100 applications for this position and of those about 30 are exceptional candidates. As this position does not necessarily meet the exemption criteria, we have contacted the applicants to let them know that we would resume the recruitment process as soon as the freeze is lifted. The third position to fill is the proof-reading position (Communications Consultant) for the Braille Access Center. While we would most likely be able to meet the exemption criteria for this position, Colleen Lines (BAC/IRC Manager) has been very creative and has found some alternatives to hiring at this point. We will revisit this recruitment at a later date.

Digital/Distance Learning

School has started and hugs and hellos have been given to our returning students. Also is the reality that we need to buckle down and get ready to study (staff and students). To this end I have been busy getting training opportunities set up for parents, staff, outreach and community members that have an interest in the topics being provided. At this time I have 25 trainings; some on campus, some web seminars through Talking Communities and many video conferences. In partnership with Texas School for the Blind we are able to tap into all of their video conference classes.

At present I have one student registered for an on-line class. Randi Smith recognized that David had an interest in foreign languages and she encouraged him to go for it. We have him scheduled to start French 1. Renee Corso has volunteered to be his tutor and her language skills will be a great asset to David. The IT staff will be working with David to ensure that he can record and submit lessons on-line. With registration going on we may pick up a few additional candidates for on-line learning.

Last spring we applied to the Murdock Foundation for a grant to work on developing math and science classes for blind and vi students. Our Foundation received notice that Murdock wants to hold a site visit. We are encouraged by this request and hope that come spring we will have money in hand to complete development in this critical area.

This summer I attended a Washington State conference in on-line learning and again came away with another partnership. We have had students take on-line classes through the Digital Learning Commons, www.learningcommons.org and specifically with Internet Academy (IA). IA offers strong curriculum that has been quite accessible for our students but not completely. In talking with IA this summer they announced they were changing providers and I offered our students to field test the classes as they changed them over. I believe this will happen shortly and we may negotiate some free classes for our kids.

So time to strap on the roller skates and get this year rolling. Looks to be exciting.

Superintendent

It been a very busy time since the June board meeting with summer programs, budget development, construction, Foundation functions, and work on the development of more partners that will allow us to continue to expand services without huge budgetary impact on any one agency/organization. I will highlight a few things that will be covered in more detail in department updates:

- **Budget:** Closing of the books kept the business office very busy. It would be great if we could go back to the days of truly operating under a biennial system, where money could be carried from one fiscal year to the other. This would be an efficiency measure in better use of limited state resources and also save a huge amount of personnel time, which could be devoted to other areas of need within the fiscal oversight area.

- Budget development: WSSB's Capital and Operating budgets have been submitted. Mary Sarate will provide the highlights in her report.
- Summer Programs: Updates will be provided by department managers.
- Construction:
 - The new Fitness Building is progressing nicely after a rocky start with major soil conditions causing additional expenditures that were not included in the budget. WSSB was able to keep the project moving forward due to the use of some operating funds from the end of the fiscal year, a transfer of funds from campus preservation projects that was authorized by the legislature, and the use of most contingency, equipment and furnishing funds. Our goal due to these issues will be to request a supplemental Capital Budget to be able to restore equipment, climbing wall, and furnishings that had to come from the projects. These items can be added at the end of construction without impacting the building schedule.
 - WSSB Irrigation Well: During construction we ran into water rights issues, which we have been working on since June. It appears that back in the 1940's and/or 1970's either paperwork to have the WSSB well grandfathered in and recorded was not filled out, partially completed or was lost resulting in no record of our well even though we have been drawing water since 1886, and the current well since 1934. This has caused delays, but with the help of many people we are working through this issue and have recently received temporary water rights, which will allow us to move forward.
 - General Campus Preservation/Sensory Safari Museum: The Museum has moved along nicely with private donations and general preservation funds used to finish painting, flooring, etc. By the time you receive this report we will have completed the Grand Opening Ceremony of this area.
 - General Campus preservation projects listed within our 2007-09 budget will be completed before June 30, 2009.
- Campus security continues to be an important factor at WSSB and with the completion of the new building, additional cameras, card locks, lighting, and campus fencing will be completed to help direct individuals throughout the campus. With the new facility we will also be able to allow for outside usage of the new building and control, to some degree, people walking across the campus during evenings and even during the school day should we decide to implement this. We want to keep an open feeling to the campus, but at the same time provide a safe environment.
- Board of Trustees Vacancies:
 - Eric Wiseman's (Congressional District 1, Everett/Bothel, etc. area) term has expired and he has stepped off the board. We want to thank Eric for his service to WSSB and blind and visually impaired children throughout the state.
 - Kay Adamson (Congressional District 8, Renton and south almost to Tumwater). Kay has served the WSSB for several terms and therefore has "termed out". We have asked Kay to remain on the board until her position is filled. We want to thank Kay for her years of service to WSSB and blind and visually impaired students from throughout our state.
 - If you know any individuals that would be interested in serving on the Board of Trustees from these two congressional districts, please have them contact Stacey Tichenor in the Boards and Commission office at stacey.tichenor@gov.wa.gov.
- Legislation in other states: The Governor of California just signed a bill requiring school districts to provide information to parents of Deaf and Blind students about the services provided at the residential schools for the blind. The bill, AB 2555, passed the Assembly last month on a 75-0 vote. It is intended to make more parents aware of the services provided by the state's three special schools: the California School for the Blind, Fremont, and the California School for the Deaf, which has campuses in Fremont and Riverside.

I am attaching a powerpoint presentation as part of my report that will be used to discuss not just the opening of school this year, but also to provide a review of the updated Strategic Plan (located on the school's website), which is the same document that was e-mailed to all board members in June. The

powerpoint presentation provides some graphs and charts, which are designed to show the importance of data collection and I will discuss how we plan to continue to modify data collection to best meet the school's needs and at the same time meet the needs of other agencies in Olympia.

Partnerships – A Key to Success

Updated information on the budget process and strategic plan

As Helen Keller said,
“Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much”

Up-Coming Events

- Student registration – Sept. 2nd and Sept. 7th
- Grand Opening – Sensory Safari “Tactile Museum of Natural History” – Sept. 5th – if interested in helping let us know
- October 24-26, 2008 – WCB Convention in Vancouver – tours of WSSB
- October 31 – Nov 2nd – NFB of WA – Everett

Governor’s Freeze and Expenditure Reductions

- Cut gas consumption by 5%
- Freeze on new hiring
- Freeze on out-of-state travel
- Freeze on personal service contracts
- Freeze on equipment purchases
- The Good news – we have some (minimal flexibility – when it come to some hiring)

Mission

To provide specialized quality educational services to visually impaired youth ages birth to 21 within the state of Washington.

Vision

“Independence for Those Who Are Blind and Visually Impaired”

Purpose

WSSB serves as a statewide demonstration and resource center providing direct and indirect services to students both on campus and in the children’s local communities. Services are provided to families, educators, and others interested in assisting visually impaired youth to become independent and contributing citizens.

Future Direction Statements

- Improve statewide services through effective partnerships.
- Place more emphasis in actively involving parents in their child’s program.
- Continue to place a heavy emphasis on WSSB as a hub of service delivery for the state as a demonstration center for “Best Practices.”

Future Direction – cont.

- Develop programs to assist students in developing positive self-image about blindness.
- Strengthen Educational and Residential programs through short-term placement with all goals leading toward independence.
- Continue to set high expectations for all students.
- Strengthen programs by making sure that each student accepted for enrollment has vision loss as a primary disability. (It is important to note that this is not an acuity dependent issue, but dependent upon each child's independent evaluation and functional/performance-based vision assessment.)

Future Direction – cont.

- Work with all consumers of services in developing school and agency pride.
- Continue to develop creative solutions through on-campus and outreach services in providing for the needs of students, parents and LEAs throughout the state.
- Continue to place strong emphasis on student safety.

Priorities of Government:

- Improve Student Achievement**
 - Increase the number of students ready for kindergarten.
 - Improve test scores.
 - Decrease gaps in student achievement between ethnic and income groups.
 - Increase high school graduation rates.

POG – cont.

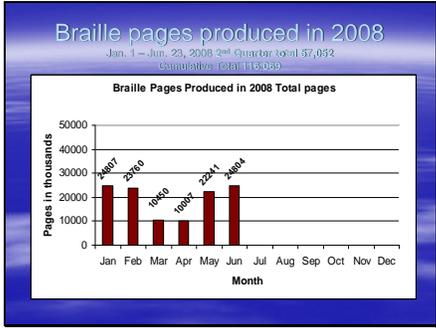
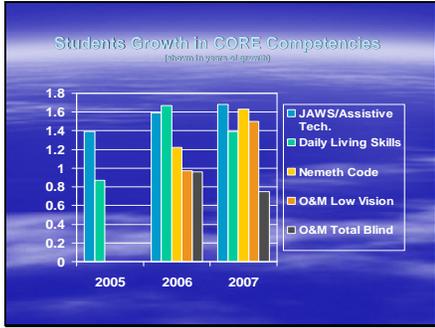
- Improve the Value of Postsecondary Education**
 - Increase the number of students who earn college degrees/job training programs.
 - Increase the percentage of students prepared to meet workforce needs.
 - Increase the number of graduates in high-demand fields.
- Improve the Security of Vulnerable children and Adults**
 - Reduce instances of abuse and neglect.
 - Increase the percentage of disabled adults who are employed.

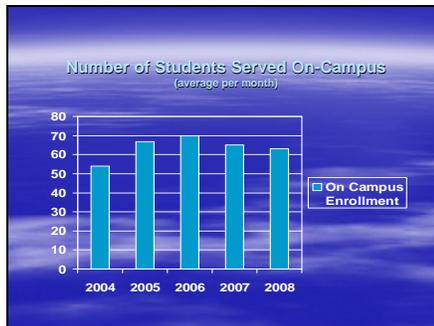
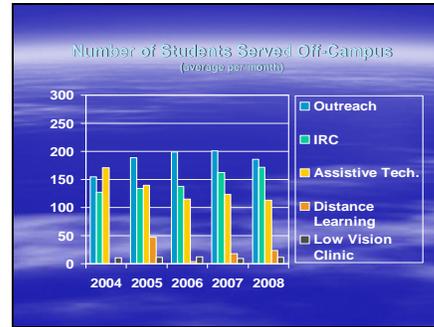
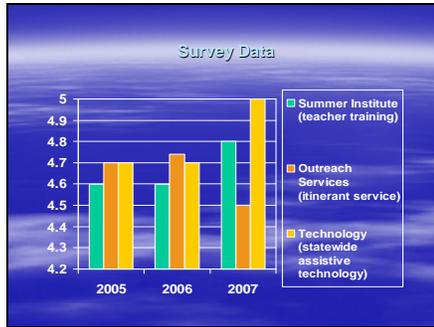
Data/Accountability

- How do we measure success?
- How do we collect effective and useful data?
- How do we use this data to fulfill our mission in improving statewide services for blind/visually impaired children?

Charts to follow

- Example of data:
 - IRC and BAC data
 - 1.5 year per year info from Craig
 - Campus enrollment – target 65-75 students
 - Importance of 24-hour IEP
 - Satisfaction survey
 - Graduation success rate
 - LIFTT success rate





WSB Foundation

Why is the Foundation so important to WSSB and the success of blind/visually impaired children?

- Raise funds to help meet unmet needs
- Raise awareness of programs, services and needs of blind/visually impaired children
- Help WSSB and others secure grants through it's 501(c)(3) status
- Provide flexibility in program and service development that is hampered through the state government system

WSSB Strategic Plan

Key factors and what this means to program development in each department.

Everything needs to relate back to the Strategic Plan in order to secure funding

All funding needs to relate back to the Priorities of State Government (POG)

2009-2011 Goals

- **Leadership** - Promote and provide leadership in the development and improvement of quality services to BVI children throughout the state of Washington (On-campus and Outreach services). This may include lobbying other state agencies to step forward to take lead in areas of responsibilities so that WSSB can support and work with them.
- **Academic Achievement** - All students will be provided a stimulating and safe environment that will lead towards high student achievement, and strong self-confidence and self esteem.
- **Best Practice** - Serve as a statewide center of best practice for information and services for BVI children.

Goals continued

- **Service Provider/Parent Training** - Enhance pre-service and in-service training for all vision related personnel and parents.
- **Public Awareness** - Increase awareness and educate the general public about blindness and visual impairment.
- **Communications** - Improve communication with families and service providers involved in the education of BVI children throughout the state.
- **Safe Environment** - Provide safe, quality equipment and facilities for the education and training of children, parents and personnel.

Refer to the 2009-2011 Strategic Plan for more detail. This can be found on the WSSB Website:
www.wssb.wa.gov

Decision Packages and targeted areas for increased focus

- Short courses: 1- 2 weeks in length.
- Intensive on-campus programs and demonstration on effectiveness in a relatively short period of time.
- K-3 program development – on-campus demand.
- Teacher shortage and recruitment.
- Regional program development.

Targeted areas – cont.

- Digital/Distance Learning expansion – major focus in:
 - On campus student involvement
 - Development of online classes
 - Development of staff expertise
 - Securing grants to facilitate the above
 - Workshops for those working with the blind
- BAC/IRC – prison program expansion

Targeted areas – cont.

- Assessment that makes sense and is helpful to the teacher, staff, parent and student.
- Parent education.
- Awareness.
- B-3 services:
 - We are not the lead agency in this area, but we feel strongly that statewide services need to be improved if we are to see the type of future gains for students we believe can happen.

Effective Partnerships is the only way a lot of what we have talked about will happen.

Each one of you is important to WSSB's success and the mission/value and purpose of the school

As Helen Keller said,
"Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much"