

**ILLINOIS ADVISORY BOARD FOR SERVICES FOR
PERSONS WHO ARE DEAF-BLIND**

**Thursday, October 6, 2011
James R. Thompson Center
100 W. Randolph Street, Room 9-034
Chicago, IL 60601
10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**

MINUTES

Members in attendance: Catherine Klein, Jody Wolfe, Bob Griffith, Shelle Hamer, Maria Roeters

Members absent: Faye Manaster, Marsha Northrup, Rose Slaght, Faith Young

Members by Phone: Gail Olson

Regular Attendees Present: Elizabeth Klein, Joann Rushing, Michelle Clyne, Sarah Sebert

Guest Present: LeAnn Hibler - Court Reporter

I. Minutes of the June 2 , 2011 meeting – Maria Roeters approves the minutes, Shelle Hamer seconds the motion.

II. Old Business

1. HKDB Awareness Week – Submitted by Faith Rosenshein Young

This year's Helen Keller DBAW campaign celebrating the accomplishments of Geraldine (Jerrie) Lawhorn was emailed out to 1123 addresses on June 27, 2011 by Engage Creative. We had an 11.8 percent open rate for this campaign, which pales in comparison to the 20 percent industry average rate for nonprofits. Our click rate was 25.2 percent, which more than doubles the industry average rate of 12.1 percent for nonprofits.

Our email list is constantly being pared down by bounced emails, spam reports, and those opting out of our email list. Our current list stands at about 1,000 for the start of our next campaign. The Engage Creative team with support from Laura Frankiewicz did an excellent job of compiling footage of Jerrie from her Educator of the Year award presentation by the Winnetka Chamber of Commerce and a past interview by Harry Porterfield with WBBM-TV (which Laura secured for our use) to create a compelling video. While the percentage of people opening our email during this campaign is about average as compared to our last campaign (at the beginning of the multi-email campaign in 2010, the open rate was higher and decreased as the campaign continued), the percentage of people who actually clicked-through to watch the video was higher. I think this was directly related to the fact that our email list is dominated by recipients who know Jerrie and therefore had a personal interest in the topic of the video. I have included some statistics comparing this campaign to last year's campaign in the table below.

DBAW Campaign Statistics 2010-2011

Date	Name	Sent	Bounced	Spam Rept	Opt-Out	Opens	Clicks	Forwards
6/27/11	DBAW 2011	1123	10.2% (115)	6	0.7% (8)	11.8% (119)	25.2% (30)	0.8% (1)
7/2/10	Fifth	1136	0.4% (5)	0	1.2% (14)	10.5% (119)	16.8% (20)	0.8% (1)
7/1/10	McKenna	1158	0.4% (5)	2	1.3% (15)	10.2% (118)	10.2% (12)	0.8% (1)
6/30/10	Tammy	1171	0.3% (3)	2	0.9% (11)	12.1% (141)	9.2% (13)	0.7% (1)
6/29/10	Dylan	1181	0.2% (2)	3	1.0% (12)	13.7% (161)	13.0% (21)	0.6% (1)
6/28/10	Catherine	1311	9.2% (120)	3	0.6% (8)	16.3% (194)	15.5% (30)	0

On YouTube the 2011 DBAW video has had 215 views. This compares with 349 views for the DBAW 2010 video, 1,028 views for the DBAW 2009 video (Aubrie), and 1,244 views for the DBAW 2008 video (Alina). Now of course many over time these videos have been able to accumulate more views, but I do believe our earlier videos may have started with a slightly higher view rate than this year's and last year's videos. The noted decrease over the past two years may also be related to the enhanced ability to view videos from our website.

Next, you may recall in initial discussions, RFB&D (Recordings for the Blind & Dyslexic) was going to record Jerrie's book "On Different Roads" with an anticipated release date to coincide with DBAW for which we would make a joint announcement. I received an apology from my contact at RFB&D. Unfortunately their efforts to rebrand to Learning Ally derailed our plans and consumed the majority of their time last winter and spring. You may recall their rebranding announcement was approximately the same timeframe as DBAW. On the bright side, however, Learning Ally does still plan to record Jerrie's book. Two possible target dates are the end of October to coincide with The Chicago Lighthouse's Deaf-Blind celebration and December to coincide with Jerrie's birthday. I have not heard anything yet about it, so I think October is probably out. A December release date is more likely and very appropriate given it will be Jerrie's 95th birthday (if my math is correct).

Moving forward to next year I think we need to focus on two things. First, we need to expand our email list so that it reaches more of our target audience. Second, we need to have a more global and timely message for our campaign. I suggest something designed around supporting individuals who are deaf-blind in the community. I think this will dove-tail nicely with an issue Bob Griffith will be discussing later and will also allow us to utilize our website more. As always, please remember, the earlier we start work on the campaign, the richer and more successful it will be. In the end, we are at the mercy of Engage Creative's work schedule. The more lead time we can give them, the better.

2. **PUNS workgroup update** – We will discuss it more at the next meeting. Regarding deaf-blind definitions, Bob handed out the proposed definitions. Gail said that we dropped the issue of trying to get a unified definition. Michelle said she would really like to have these definitions electronically so that she can use them and post them on their website.
3. **Mabley & Kreider Center & response to proposed closures-** Bob said that state agencies are not supposed to be on record opposing these state closures. As citizens, we can certainly write a letter with our opinions on the closure, but we cannot do anything as a board. Gail and Sarah are surprised with this decision as this is one of the purposes of our board. Gail, Laura, Catherine, Rose and Bob visited the Mabley & Kreider Center this summer. Gail said the Mabley Center was very home like and the residents were happily engaged. Jody asked about whether anyone had sent a letter thanking them for showing us their facility. Bob said that no this hasn't been done since he is waiting for updated letterhead. Jody will be updating the letterhead so that Bob can write this letter. Bob said that Mabley Center has a better understanding of the issues of deaf-blindness.
4. **Approval of Annual Report** - With the corrected changes to be made by Jody, the board approves the annual report and the adjusted report will be sent to Todd Williams.
5. **Other** - Shelle Hamer is now an official board member and has been in the visually impaired area for over 30 years. She has a Master's Degree in Special Ed working with the visually impaired. She worked in Arizona originally and moved to IL in 1985 and has worked in many capacities with the 0-3 and 3-5 years olds. She is now in administration and is a chair of IL Vision Council.

III. New Business

1. **Stakeholder meeting** - Michelle wants to get everyone's input on on the Project Reach survey. They did the survey electronically with people in their database. They found family members who didn't respond to the survey and they randomly called parents to get their input. Their family specialists are currently contacting those family members. Sarah asked who were service providers/administrators? These are people who they have directly communicated with. Service providers are teachers, OT, PT, those people who work directly with the student. In summary, Reach had really low awareness with administrators on their model classroom. Service providers were less aware of general information like website. Most of their services seemed to be relevant by administrators. Between 70-90%, the administrators found their services useful.

Given this information, Project Reach is adjusting in the following ways:

- 1) Will complete the OSEP/NCDB Product Proposal Process as soon as it is available to develop (with permission) and provide distance information on high-priority topics, including: Electronic availability on website of PRC Sign Language book (communication need) and segments of PRC "Do You See What I See" video (CVI need), and video segments from Model Classrooms linked to Classroom Observation Instrument (various strategies, including use of AT).

- 2) Increase visibility at conferences, especially those targeting administrators. Giveaways with Reach/PRC logo have been purchased.
- 3) Increase number of Model Classrooms and complete new round of advertisements

Michelle said that even though they have limited funds, they can pay money to go exhibit at these conferences. Joann and Gail said that she can put out Michelle's materials at any conference that they attend/exhibit.

Currently they have 3 model classrooms in Elmhurst, Batavia and Champaign. They would like to increase this number around different parts of the state.

Please e-mail Michelle any suggestions/input that you have on the survey results.

- 2. Ad Hoc committee Formation concept** - Bob wants to set up some workgroups since most of the work gets done outside of the meeting. Bob would like to propose that we set up workgroups. We have done some of this in the past. One would be a group to look at the bemyvoice webpage to improve it. Bob wants to have a way on our webpage to provide technical assistance to people who need it. Gail said that our website does allow people to contact us and it does link them to available services. We also have to be careful not to cross the line from an advisory board to a service provider. Project Reach does have this capability on their website as well. Another workgroup would be a legislative committee to look at legislation/funding for those who are deaf-blind, but not developmentally disabled.

Gail said we need to create definitions of the workgroups and then send them out to everyone to see who is interested in the workgroups. Bob asked whether the bemyvoice webpage provide adequate resource for those parents who are looking for support/assistance? Regarding legislation, Gail said that we decided a few years ago that as individuals, we would share any legislation rather than research it as a workgroup. Gail said that the Arc of IL sends out information regarding legislation as well. Gail said that every agency usually has someone who is monitoring legislation. We decided that when pertinent legislation comes to our attention, we would report this to the board. Gail Olson will report for those 0-3 years, Bob - 18 yrs and older, and Sarah from State Board for 3-18.

Bob also wants to invite those Directors from State Agencies to come to our meeting.

Do we want to have committees? Michelle said that we probably can't make this decision at this meeting since there aren't enough members here. We all agree that there needs to be ongoing committee work, we can't talk in detail on them now.

- 3. Proposed guidelines on member responsibilities** - Bob put something together and we will discuss it at the next meeting. Jody asked if there was something in the code and according to Michelle, it only covers those stipends and has nothing about member responsibilities. We can't write by-laws, but we can write a list of expected responsibilities. Jody will adjust #1 of the responsibilities and send it out to everyone.

4. **ISD/ISVI** - They are still working on the governance issue. They are still working where the schools should fall under. The schools are worried regarding the budget cut and they don't have enough money to make it through the year. There are a number of staff vacancies at each school that can't be filled because of funds. Gail will get some more information and send it out to us about the room/board issue and whether they are going to ask parents to pay.
5. **Other** - Bob researched the deaf-blind scholarship that existed years ago. The state board said they have no information that this existed and Bob said he cannot find anything.

Also, Center for Independent living doesn't have a separate category of deaf-blindness in their intake form (this is a Federal document). Bob met with the executive director for the Center and she agreed to reach out to their directors to identify and keep statistics on those people who they encounter who are deaf-blind. Since it is a Federal document, it cannot be changed. Joann said that the main goal is to identify people who are deaf-blind so we can get more funding. Joann talked to Laurie Thomas at HKNC and they are working on it at the Federal level. They are hoping in the next few years, it will get changed. Joann said that the intake people need to be better educated on how to identify those people who are deaf-blind. Joann and Bob can work on getting appropriate questions into the hands of those intake people at the Centers.

5. **Ethics Training:**

If people have questions about the Ethics training, contact Michelle. Michelle needs to collect the acknowledgement of participation. State employees just need to fax their signed copies to Michelle. Those people not here will be trained separately.

IV. **Standing Reports**

1. **LeCOBDA** - submitted by Catherine Klein

Le COBDA's September meeting took place on Saturday, September 10. Members and volunteers met at a farmers market located at Dearborn and Polk street in Chicago. Joann Rushing, manager of the Deaf-Blind program at the Chicago Lighthouse, distributed recyclable shopping bags to us. Members were able to explore and purchase fresh fruits, vegetables, jellies, cheese and bakery goods. Beautiful early fall weather enhanced the enjoyment of the day. The outing was well attended and the majority of the members and volunteers had lunch at a nearby Hackneys restaurant.

2. **SSP Task Force** – no report at this time

3. **IDHHC** – no report at this time

V. Agency Reports

1. HVEIO - August 2011 - Submitted by Gail Olson

HV/EIO is a statewide training and technical assistance program regarding infants and toddlers who are deaf, hard of hearing or visually impaired. HV/EIO is funded by the Illinois Department of Human Services, Bureau of Early Intervention since April 1, 2011. It was previously known as Hearing and Vision Connections from July 1999 to March 31, 2011.

Hearing and Vision Connections was closed as a program on March 31, 2011 and reopened April 1, 2011 as Hearing and Vision Early Intervention Outreach. All contact information for HV/EIO remains the same as it was for HVC:

Hearing and Vision Early Intervention Outreach
Illinois School for the Deaf
125 Webster Avenue
Jacksonville, Illinois 62650

Phone: 217-479-4320

Fax: 217-479-4328

Email: gail.olson@illinois.gov

URL: www.morgan.k12.il.us/isd/hvc

Facebook search: [Hearing and Vision Early Intervention Outreach](#)

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Hearing-and-Vision-Early-Intervention-Outreach/128802893816523>

- All brochures, booklets, exhibit panels, website, business cards and Facebook page were updated to reflect the name change.
- **HV/EIO electronic updates** to statewide stakeholders have replaced hard copy newsletters. Updates are sent via email.
- Pertinent information for parents and EI providers is sent via email and Facebook postings as they are received. Primary target audiences are parents, Designated Service Coordinators, Developmental Therapist/Hearing and Developmental Therapists/Vision.
- **Parent conferences** in vision and hearing have been scheduled and separate planning committees for each one have been meeting regularly via phone conferences. Topics and presenters have been selected and flyers have been drafted. The planning continues.

South of Eighty Conference for Parents of Children with Hearing Loss
November 5, 2011, Jacksonville

North of Eighty Conference for Parents of Children with Hearing Loss
March 24, 2012, Rockford

South of Seventy Conference for Parents of Children with Hearing Loss
April 14, 2012, Mt. Vernon

Southern Vision Conference
March 17, 2012, Mt. Vernon

Northern Vision Conference
April 17, 2012, Rockford

- **Designated Service Coordinator Webinar Training** has been scheduled:

Part I: December 8, 2011, Hearing, by Nancy Scott

Part II. December 15, 2011, Vision, by Mindy Ely

- **Functional Vision Assessment Training** was provided to new Developmental Therapist/Vision by Mindy Ely August 26, 2011 in Bloomington.
- **Functional Vision and Hearing Screening Training** has been scheduled stateside:
 - October 19, 2011, Thompson Center, Chicago
 - November 10, 2011 Fairview Hgts (site TBD)
 - February 1, 2012, Springfield (site TBD)
 - March 14, 2012, Batavia Library
- Gail Olson of HV/EIO will be working with Janet McGovern of ISVI on **Opening Doors, Parent Infant Institute** at Illinois School for the Visually Impaired to be held June 6-9. A planning committee is being formed and first meeting for FY 12 is being scheduled.
- HV/EIO will be presenting two topics at the **ISD Parent Infant Institute** June 10-15, 2012
- HV/EIO is participating in the Planning of the **Annual Illinois Parent Leaders Collaboration Conference**, scheduled for April 28, 2011 at the Spaulding Pastoral Center in Peoria. Paula Kluth is the featured presenter.
- **Illinois Early Intervention Vision Service Guidelines** and **Illinois Early Intervention Hearing Service Guidelines** are in draft revision form and are at the DHS Bureau of Early Intervention for approval. Upon approval, they will be widely distributed and posted on the HV/EIO website.
- Gail Olson is meeting monthly with the **birth to three programs** at the ISD and ISVI.
- An **IAER Preconference** for DTV's and DTO&M's has been scheduled for February 15 in Shaumburg. Topics are under discussion.
- An **ITHI Preconference** for DTH's has been scheduled for March 1 in Springfield and topics have been selected.
- We are currently selecting dates for a **summer mini camp for DTH's and DTV's** (likely to be held late June).
- **New Parent Hearing Packets** have been replaced with an electronic version of the informational packet which will be posted on the HV/EIO website.
- A new **New Parent Vision Packet** of information is being created electronically and will be posted on the HV/EIO website.
- We have greatly increased postings and participants on the **HV/EIO Facebook** page. June 1, we had 40 members. We now have 201 and our site was used 123 times in the three days of August 29-31, 2011.
- HV/EIO will be exhibiting and facilitating at the **Sharing a Vision Conference** September 26-28.
- Staff continues to participate on **boards and councils** including: Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Council, STARnet I and III Advisory Council, Choices for Parents, Illinois Advisory Board for Deaf Blind, Illinois Hands and Voices, Illinois Parent Leaders Collaboration, Illinois Vision Leaders, Illinois Supervisors of Programs Serving Individuals who are Deaf/ Hard of Hearing (ISHI).
- HV/EIO plans to participate in the **National Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Conference** in St. Louis March 4-6 in St. Louis.
- HV/EIO attending a meeting regarding **Illinois Preschool Vision Screening** September 29, 2011.
- 31 Technical Assistance responses July and August 2011.

2. **ISBE** – no report at this time.

3. **Philip Rock Center/Project Reach Agency Report**

Project Reach Report September 2011

Project Reach is continuing to collect information as part of the Stakeholder's Survey. Families not yet completing the survey were selected, randomly, for telephone interviews to be conducted by the Philip J. Rock Center Family Specialists. The hope is to add the responses for 50 more families, including some that speak Spanish primarily, for a more inclusive picture of this demographic of stakeholders.

Three Project Reach staff also participated in the ALL-ISTAC planning day in Bloomington. All IS-TAC projects, including IATTAP, ISRC, PBIS, PEP and Project Choices are working to develop integrated technical assistance processes within a few targeted districts.

Philip Rock Center

Summer School Fun

Summer was a busy, busy time at PRC. The children survived the warm weather and enjoyed many experiences. The Brookfield Zoo Trip was a highlight!

School Happenings!

PRC teachers and leaders returned on September 1 and the children were off to the community schools on September 7th. I have attached the class list with staff assignments which will reflect several changes in our staff. This spring and summer we said goodbye to 3 full time staff. Head Nurse, Arlene Beaton, got her BSN in May and has taken another position. Tim Pagani, primary classroom paraprofessional secured a full time teaching position with CPS. Jan Beisner, long time dorm supervisor retired at the end of August. We will miss Arlene, Tim and Jan very much. They were all exemplary employees who gave our students great care!

New staff include; Amy Sears, LPN who accepted the dorm supervisor position. Doris Thompson (middle) and Eufemia Rakstang (right) are new paraprofessionals assigned to the PM shift classroom. Jeffrey Koenig (left) will be working AM in the secondary classroom. We extend a warm welcome to the new staff at PRC. We are very happy to have them aboard.

FALL UPDATES

PRC staff has just completed our FY11 end of year report and our FY12 School Improvement Plan (SIP). The SIP consists of eight goals and the corresponding activities designed to improve how PRC delivers service to the students. The PRC FY12 annual program goals are as follows:

1. To increase effective practices in the instructional program for deaf/blind children.
2. To increase student literacy and numeracy across environments, and access to literacy and numeracy through communication systems.

3. To improve the competencies of the staff to better meet the needs of the children.
4. To improve the use of technology as a method to encourage and document student performance.
5. To improve communication with all constituents.
6. To increase PRC students' opportunities for experiences in general education program.
7. To increase service and practices related to transition to adulthood.
8. To maintain school accreditation and improve overall performance.

Did you Know? That the 2011-12 School calendar and PRC's "2010 Reflections" video can be viewed online. <http://project-reach-illinois.org> click on the Philip J. Rock Center & School link at the left and select school. You will see at the top in red "2010 Reflections" and "2011-12 School Calendar" click on which one you would like to view.

Team Meetings

Teamwork is key to achieving success. When staff and families work collaboratively it results in improved student outcomes. This year PRC is implementing a couple of things to improve home/school collaboration.

1. Classroom team meetings will be held on a monthly basis. Parents will be invited to participate in person or by phone. The September meetings are scheduled as follows:

Primary – Monday, October 19 @ 2:45 pm

Intermediate – Monday, October 26 @ 2:00 pm

Secondary – Monday October 26 @ 2:45 pm

Upcoming Events

October 8, 9:00 – 10:30 am – Community Outreach Breakfast @ Broadview Baptist Church Open to all PRC students, staff and their families

October 9, 2:00 – 4:00 pm – PRC Fall Open House

Thanksgiving Home Visit – November 23 @ 3:00 pm – Students home

November 27 @ 3:00 pm – Students return to School

4.

5. DRS –

The training provided to the BBS and BFS DRS staff by Helen Keller National Center last May was a huge success. Since the training we have seen an increase in the 2 bureaus working together to provide services and assistance to our customers. We are very excited that our staff were so receptive and as a result, DRS, Chicago Lighthouse and Helen Keller are working together to develop on-going collaborative trainings, programs and workshops related to service provision for individuals who are deafblind. More and more VR customers who are deafblind are being referred to ICRE-Wood to learn Braille, O&M, Activities of Daily Living, Keyboarding, etc and to HKNC for similar training.

6. DCFS – Director Erwin McEwin left DCFS. D.Jean Ortega-Piron is now the acting director for DCFS.

Maria Roeters motions to adjourn our meeting. Shelle Hamer seconds the motion. Meeting ends at 1:03 p.m.