

VI/O&M Network Meeting
February 13, 2008
Notes

❖ **Welcome and Introductions**

- Information that will be included in VI directory was shared and teachers corrected and ok'd the information

❖ **Presentation by James Hunter (Christal Vision)**

- James showed a variety of low vision devices. Merlin CCTV, Acrobat LCD, Student Classic, Quicklook, Amigo, and talked about ZoomEX. James does come out to districts and can bring a variety of products to try with a student. He provided contact information for Jack Hickman (blindness products) 214-808-5355, and Marcie 214-732-5788 and his own information 1-800-299-0700 or cell 210-365-7399. Teachers were able to try out equipment and ask James questions.

❖ **Presentation by Kimberly Cook (ESC-2) Equipment from RFB&D**

- Kimberly shared information about the Victor Reader and the compact Victor Reader. RFB&D has provided the ESC-2 with two of the larger readers and one of the compact readers to make available for checkout. Call her if you are interested.

❖ **VI Annual Registration**

- Registration was due last Friday. Teachers report that it went very well. 2 teachers reported that they did report out of date eye reports. Discussion of how to get eye reports and how the ARD can accept a report that it is old and it becomes current.

❖ **2007 Deafblind Census Data**

- Rachel reported on results of 2007 DB Census. We were down one student from the year before. Teachers did not feel that information needed to be offered in Spanish for their families.

❖ **Changes in the Deafblind Census**

- Viewed a powerpoint about the changes in the DB Census that was shared with the SPED Director's at their last meeting. Based on e-mail from Jim, hopefully the DB Census will be in the mail to districts by next week. Rachel shared the creation of the new statewide AI network that Kimberly Cook will be the ESC-2 contact, and also the AI conference Nov. 20-22 2008 in Houston focusing on Low Functioning AI, At risk and DB students. Reminder that DB Symposium should be in Spring 2009.

- ❖ **Accommodations & Modifications in the Texas Assessment System**
 - Reviewed the Braille and Large Print sections of the *District and Campus Coordinators Manual* and the *Accommodations Manual*. Each teacher was given a handout with the page numbers noted and copies of the pages addressed. Teachers asked that Rachel raise concerns at the next statewide VI network meeting about the LP font sizes on the tests.
- ❖ **Foundations for Life Conference (DARS-DBS)**
 - Joanne and Gonzo provided large yearly calendars for teachers to have. Also asked for you to contact them if you would like to help with the conference in April.
- ❖ **Bookshare.org information-Candy Ryan**
 - Candy shared the success of bookshare.org sign up. It was not real easy, but you must be persistent. You may need to contact your tech department for help.
- ❖ **VI Students in Daycare**
 - Teachers wrote down information if they are serving a student in a daycare. Rachel will work with Karen Turner (ESC-2) to make sure that the daycare knows what to do about the fingerprinting issues that are occurring. If the daycares are on Karen's list and participate in her program, she may also be able to provide some things to the daycare to help the VI student.
- ❖ **VI Teachers in ARDs**
 - Based on 2004 IDEA Reauthorization and the latest Commissioner Rules, AI VI & DB teachers may be excused from ARD attendance if specific things are done. Legal references are "Code of Federal Regulations (34CFR300.321) and Texas Administrative Code (TAC 89.1050). Rachel did speak to this with the Special Education Directors at their last meeting and cautioned them about this practice.
- ❖ **Ed Prep VI-Alternative Certification Program**
 - Special Education Directors have been told that we will try to run a program beginning this summer. It will cost more than ever before, it is an expensive program to run and will still need to be supported financially. We want to have commitments from districts by the end of the month so we will know if we have enough participants to make the program go. The VI Ed Prep Advisory Committee was discussed and how they came to their decision to recommend supporting the VI Certification program.
- ❖ **Coordinated Set of Activities**
 - Each teacher got a bound copy of the Activities. It is a great resource, originally started by the Transition network and made VI specific by the VI Network. Useful tool for making sure that you are providing transition activities that are needed.

❖ **Technology Olympics**

- Set date for Technology Olympics---May 14, 2008. Rachel will contact Veronica to work on Whataburger Meals. Sign-up sheet was passed around for the workgroup. The workgroup will meet Monday May 18, 2008 at 9:00-12:00 to review, revise, etc... the application and set due dates for return of the applications. At that time they will also set the next workgroup meeting to schedule events and create packets

❖ **VI Family Picnic**

- Set date for picnic for September 20, 2008. Veronica has offered to speak with her Texas Parks and Wildlife contact about the fishing idea mentioned last year and Rachel will get the reservation made.

❖ **Next Meeting**

- April 2, 2008 will be the final networking meeting this year. We will be completing our needs assessments for next year and writing our regional plan for next year.