

Northwest Association of Special Programs
Board Meeting
May 26, 2011
Phone **1-800-411-6508 ext. 7421**
2:00 pm Pacific
Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

Roll Call –

Present: Neil McFarlane, Dely Judal, Ginny Redmond, Mike Evans, Marc Coomer, Vicki Trier, Barb Brodsky, Al Phillips, Abby Muro, Lois Rasmussen, Deborah Walker, Luci Loera, Donnie Hale, Sari Byerly.

Approval of February Minutes

- **Keynote speaker name correction is Denny Hurtado, in President Elect's Report. Marc moves to accept minutes with amendments, Lois seconded. Minutes approved.** Abby will send minutes to Vicki with corrections.

Review of Agenda

Any additions to minutes? Ginny asks what they could do about helping legislation; Vicki will be covering that in her agenda.

Officers' Reports

President – Vicki Trier

- Fair Share: Al Phillips from COE will be joining us
 - Please see Fair Share report updates: As a region, we are at 88%. Alaska is at 67%; needs just one more membership. They will be waiting for fiscal year to end. June 15th deadline for a \$300.00 savings. Idaho 127% Oregon 77% Washington 90%, region is at 88%. Discussion of Oregon fair share goals. Don and Deborah have been in contact to discuss what programs are eligible for the \$300.00 savings. Discussion of Washington fair share goals. Al asks for members to consider making council their 501c3 donations. Is it too much for the council to be asking TRIO professionals to be giving? Discussion was had on the topic. Many believe it is too much to ask.
 - The COE board recommended that COE only work will members in the appeals process.

- Project memberships to NASP (Lois will talk about this in the budget)
- COE Board meeting update (see attachments)
 - Importance of staying in contact with Congress members.
 - Public Relations Handbook (see attachment): This is a guidebook we can use get people behind our cause. Helps keep our programs in the news. Send feedback to Heather Valentine. **Any ideas of how this topic can be presented at the conference send to Luci.**
- State Scorecard: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/COE2011Scorecard0411> : This is a way for COE to keep track of what is happening in the states. **Vicki encourages the State Presidents to fill out the scorecard.**

President-Elect – Lucila Loera: **Nothing to report.**

Past-President – Neil McFarlane

- Nominations for Active Non-Trio Board Member, President-Elect, Secretary: 3 candidates for secretary and will be sent Vicki. Gabe from UW for President Elect. 2 other individuals for president-elect withdrew. Is a supervisor approval form for elections in place? Neil says yes. Dely emphasizes the important for this.

Secretary – Abby Muro: **Nothing to report.**

Treasurer – Lois Rasmussen

- Budget update: Report was sent out. As of the 24th, \$5551.18 in the bank. Itemized income and expenses by category. We are not receiving project memberships. Vicki forwarded the list. Is it Lois's job to inform new projects of NASP memberships or the state? Question was asked about whether we have enough funds in the bank for the conference. Lois clarified that cost coming from conference registration. The registration form in up on the web. Lois will put together a list of last year's memberships and send it to Vicki to send to the rest of the board. **Vicki asks the state presidents to take the charge of those projects still needing to renew membership.**

Communications Chair – Sari Byerly

- Sari will be working on the web page on her to do list. Will be updating with COE information.

Fair Share Coordinator – Deborah Walker

- Vicki would like the state presidents to help with a final push. Deborah really believes personal contributions may be helpful. Board members may want to approach those who may give. Would like to create a list of programs to target/contact.

State Presidents' Reports

Alaska – Ginny Redmond

- In a week, website will be up. Members will have a chance to comment. Government Relations committee is up and running. The focus of the committee is to address relations with government about current issues. Board met in March, created and adopted a strategic plan based on the score plan. Survey was conducted on program involvement in state organization. Alaska is waiting to hear on 501c3 status. Postcard campaign update.

Idaho – Donnie Hale

- IATP meeting in April was in large attendance and very informative. Focused on financial literacy and moving forward. Have 501c3 and working on a plan to create funds.

Oregon – Mike Evans

- Held Oregon Student/Alumni Leadership Conference at Oregon State University on April 8th, 2011. Approximately 300 students and staff and alumni from attended the event highlighted by Keynote speaker Ronnie Brooks (former COE Board Chair) and an alumni panel of 8 outstanding leaders.
- Conducted first Oregon TRiO Association meeting since becoming official 501c3. Forty five staff members from 20 programs attended from 10:00 – 2:00 hosted by the University of Oregon TRiO programs.
- The OTA Board voted unanimously at the board meeting to sign on to the Lending Library Position Statement as submitted and urged the NASP Board and other state associations to sign on to the statement. (Please see attached)
- The OTA created three standing committees that will serve to further the purposes of the organization and assigned members to each of these committees. The committees include the Student/Alumni Leadership Conference Planning Committee, the Professional Development Committee, and the Finance Committee
- The OTA decided that it will help support the activities of the organization by creating a \$100 annual project membership fee.

Washington – Marc Coomer

State Professional Development Day (Ellensburg) – April 11th

- 78 registrants – 72 participants (up from 52 in 2010)
- Heather Valentine of COE presented on marketing and advocacy
- Great participation in afternoon breakout sessions.
- Lisa Taylor of Centralia CC has agreed to coordinate the WA Student Leadership Conference for next year (Feb 8, 2012)

Appointment of Non-TRiO member

- Dr. Jim Perez has been appointed as non-TRiO rep. He is retired from a long standing career in Higher Education, particularly in Student Services. He was a first-generation, low-income student from a migrant family background. He is also an EWU alumnus and has co-written a successful Talent Search grant in the

past.

- Planning to propose renaming the position to Community Representative (will need approval of membership). Dean Kelly is working with Jim to define the role.

EWU's letter from the president to congress was sent out as a model letter by COE. (Way to go Aaron Brown!) Vicki will forward letter to the board.

WSTA board next meets in August.

Other Business

- Vicki wanted to follow up with commending everyone' honestly with COE. These are issues various officers have expressed to them for many years. Continued comments are important to hear. Send comments Vicki's way and she can send them forward.

Old Business

- Elections: 2nd week of June will be up and running, information on candidates is needed for this to happen.
- Bylaws: needs to be approved. Changes that were made in August. If you have that file with the changes, please send to Vicki.
- SSS Lending Library (Mike Evans, see attachment)
 - Mike gave background on the issue and shared that his motivation for writing this was that he was concerned other programs and new directors would discontinue the practice because they didn't know the details.
 - Mike formally moved the **NASP Board adopt this statement**. Marc Coomer seconded the motion.
 - Discussion on the motion centered on whether this was the right time to address the changes and shouldn't this have been brought up during the comment period for the SSS application. Dely confirmed that this was normally the case.
 - Mike mentioned this policy had been changed after the grants were awarded.
 - Sari called for the vote
 - 3 yes, 3 nay, 2 abstentions, Vicki voted nay to break the tie.
 - The group agreed that more time was needed to develop the statement and more research needed to be done.
 - Vicki asked Mike and Marc to contact other SSS colleagues in other states and regions to get their interpretations of the policy.
 - Sari mentioned she had spoken with her colleagues in ASPIRE and they viewed lending libraries as direct service and thus unallowable.
- Barb Brodsky asked for a formal motion to made to reimburse Friends of NASP from the investment account for the \$2000 we provided for the Grays Harbor College student to participate in COE's Study Abroad this summer.
 - Luci moved same and Neil seconded. Motion passed unanimously
- Luci reminded the Board that the themes of the conference workshops would be

Assessment, Direct Services, Budget Management

- Vicki asked if conference information would be up on the NASP website soon so people would be able to register, Luci said yes.

New Business

Announcements

Vicki announced that she has a full SurveyMonkey membership and if anyone needed to use it for surveys to contact her for login information.

Meetings for 2011

- Last Thursday of the month
- 2:00 pm Pacific time (3:00 Mountain, 1:00 Alaska)
- Dates: June 23, July 21, Sept. 29
- August (Spokane): August 5-7 (start at 7 am on 5th and 6th, Breakfast only on the 7th), Meals provided
- October (Spokane): Oct. 22 (10 am-5 pm), Oct. 23 (9 am-3 pm), Meals provided

Adjourned at 3:45 pm

Updates for the COE Board Meeting and Department of Education

Last week Dr. Eduardo Ochoa, Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education and Dr. Linda Byrd-Johnson addressed the COE Board of Directors at their May meeting. They were anxious to provide the TRIO community with the latest information. Most of the updates provided below were given by Dr. Byrd-Johnson.

\$26.6 Million Cut to TRIO Programs

The Department of Education accepted the COE Board's recommendation to spread the FY 2011 budget cuts across all TRIO programs. ED hopes that the continuation grant award notifications will show the cuts from HR 1473. Projects may have to submit revised budgets based on this information. ED will be open to changes but want to see projects reduce personnel as opposed to students served.

Upward Bound

ED is working hard to have the non-competing grant awards for the projects that begin June 1 to the project directors by the end of May. The grant awards may come as a fax or an e-mail. Projects that have a September 1 start date will receive their non-competing grant award notifications (GAN) sometime this summer.

The competition is slated to be held with a closing date of October 2011. The Dept. plans to host technical workshops in August.

ED asks that everyone take advantage of the comment period and read over the application once it has been posted on the federal register.

Upward Bound Math/Science

The competition is slated to be held with a closing date of January 2012. Projects will receive their non-competing grant awards sometime this summer.

Veterans Upward Bound

The competition is slated to be held with a closing date of March 2012. Projects will receive their non-competing grant awards sometime this summer.

CCRAA

116 projects submitted requests to revise their budget to prevent loss of services. Most have been reviewed and approved, but they have a few questions on some. Dr. Byrd-Johnson thought that all the projects that submitted budget revisions have been notified. Please contact your program specialist if you have not heard.

Dr. Byrd Johnson expected that they would still have the funding to extend their funding through January 31, 2012.

Talent Search

ED is hopeful the slate will be released by the beginning of June.

Grantees that are not successful in the initial slate but fall within the funding band will have 15 days after notification to inform the Dept. that they want a second review. [Detailed information on this process will be sent out by COE later this week]

After completion of competition, ED will have separate APRs for TS and EOC because of changes in the law.

EOC

The closing date to submit an EOC grant application is today, Monday, May 23. ED apologized for the confusion on the directions provided in some areas of the grant application.

They will begin reading grants the week of June 20th and will release the initial slate in August.

Student Support Services

ED will host a number of sessions at COE's Annual Conference. One will be on the new Student Support Services APR.

GANs will sent out in July.

McNair

The competition is slated to be held with a closing date of March 2012.

There will be Technical Workshops in October with a March due date.

GANs will sent out in July.

Overall

ED will be conducting a Grant Satisfaction Survey. They urge all programs to complete the survey.

Lending Libraries Position Statement

Introduction

In the fall of 2010, many TRIO Student Support Services (SSS) projects were informed by their Program Specialist in the Office of Federal TRIO Programs that they were no longer allowed to provide a lending library or check out laptop computers to their participants. Program Specialists referred to the SSS regulations as their authority for declaring these services to be unallowable, citing 34 CFR 646.31b, which states that tuition, fees, stipends, and other forms of “direct financial support” are unallowable costs. The following position statement will clarify why lending libraries are allowable according to the regulations, examine the arguments advanced to support the claim that they are unallowable and explain the effectiveness of lending libraries helping SSS participants and projects achieve the purposes of the SSS Program.

Lending Libraries are Allowable Costs

The purposes of the SSS program according to the regulations (34 CFR 646.1) are to increase retention and graduation rates of eligible students; Increase the transfer rate of eligible students from two-year to four-year institutions; and foster an institutional climate supportive of the success of low-income and first generation college students and individuals with disabilities through services such as those described in 34 CFR 646.4. The final item listed among the services an SSS project may provide (34 CFR 646.4 (k)) is “Other activities designed to meet the purposes of the Student Support Services Program.” Therefore, SSS projects have the authority according to the regulations to provide services designed to meet the purposes of the program which increase the retention and graduation rates of project participants. Lending libraries clearly meet a student need related to increasing their retention and graduation rates, namely having the textbooks or other educational materials for their classes.

As long as items purchased by the grant remain the property of the grant, and are only checked out to participants with an agreement that they must be returned at the end of the checkout period (e.g., the end of the semester), then the lending of items from a lending library does not violate 34 CFR 646.31(b). In other words, as long as projects do not purchase items using grant funds and give them to students, thereby transferring ownership of the item from the grant to a student, projects are not violating this regulation.

The Office of Federal TRIO Programs has misinterpreted this regulation, as all three examples given in the regulation are forms of “direct financial support” in that they transfer funds from the project to a student, in essence giving the student money. Examples of “other forms of direct financial support” that would violate this regulation could include purchasing a student’s parking permit, buying a bus pass for a student or providing a student a voucher for food purchased with grant funds. Each of these represents a situation where grant funds become the property of the student. Lending libraries do not fit into this category, as items in a lending library never become the property of the student and are therefore not “direct financial support.”

Arguments Against Lending Libraries

It has been argued that because textbooks are one of the categories factored into the cost of attendance for students receiving federal financial aid, that lending libraries are somehow a violation of the regulation 34 CFR 646.31(b). The fact that textbooks are part of the calculation of a student's cost of attendance in no way makes lending libraries a form of "direct financial support." First of all, as stated above, lending items is not direct financial support. Secondly, if the intention of the regulation was to prohibit the project from spending money on items based on their inclusion in the cost of attendance it would certainly have been written to say that, "any cost included in the cost of attendance for federal financial aid is unallowable." Rather, the regulation specifies that stipends, which are not at all associated with the calculation of the cost of attendance, are unallowable. The regulation clearly intends to prevent the direct transfer of funds from the project to a student, period, and has nothing to do with cost of attendance.

It has also been asserted that lending libraries are not allowable because they are not specifically listed in the regulations as one of the items that SSS projects may provide. This argument is clearly incorrect in that the last item in the list of services that an SSS project may provide (34 CFR 646.4(k)) states that the project may provide "Other activities designed to meet the purposes of the Student Support Services Program." This regulation clearly indicates that projects have the authority to create other services not listed among items a – j, as long as they are designed to meet the purposes of increasing retention, graduation or transfer. Making it possible for students to have access to textbooks and educational materials clearly has a positive impact on these purposes and is therefore an allowable activity.

Lending Libraries are Effective

Many SSS projects across the country have provided lending libraries for over 15 years, providing project participants access to textbooks and other items essential to student success. While these libraries vary from project to project, they are universally viewed by students and TRIO professionals as an essential service in projects where they are available.

The purposes of SSS programs include increasing the retention and graduation rates of eligible participants. Having textbooks and access to educational materials clearly has a significant impact on student retention and graduation.

Lending libraries are effective because they help meet the ever growing unmet need of low-income students in higher education. While the calculation of the cost of attendance includes a budget for books and supplies, the amount of aid received by SSS participants typically falls significantly short of meeting the student's full financial need, resulting in a substantial unmet need. In many institutions, the average unmet need is over \$5,000 per participant. For these participants, who must choose between paying rent and food bills versus purchasing a textbook, a lending library is the only way they are able to acquire the materials they need to succeed in their courses.

In addition to the obvious positive impact on student retention of having access to textbooks, SSS projects have reported significant improvement in student success behaviors associated with their lending library activities. For example, many projects have tied eligibility to check out items to specific student behaviors such as mandatory meetings with counselors, participation in SSS success courses, and mandatory tutoring for students on academic warning. In essence, projects have used the lending library as a

way to shape student behavior resulting in an increase in student participation in project services. As is clearly demonstrated in the retention literature, students who spend more time on task, work closely with counselors and advisors outside of class, and develop connections with other students are more likely to be retained. Lending libraries give projects a powerful tool to use to encourage these behaviors.

Conclusion

Lending libraries that have been developed in many SSS projects are a critical service that leads to increased retention and graduation of participants. It is incorrect on the part of the Office of Federal TRIO Programs to assert that lending libraries are unallowable costs based on the regulations. As long as projects are careful not to allow items from lending libraries to become the property of the students who check them out, they are not in violation of the regulations and are indeed providing a service designed to meet the purposes of the SSS program. Therefore, it is the request of the signatories of this position statement that the Office of Federal TRIO Programs officially recognize the legitimacy of lending libraries within the SSS program.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH S. JAMES PEREZ, Ph.D.

The youngest of nine siblings, Jim was born into and is a product of a migrant family lifestyle. Being raised in a traditional Hispanic household, he was monolingual Spanish until entering the public school system. Despite this and other disadvantages, he was determined to break the farmworker cycle through education and he was the first in his family to successfully attain a post-secondary education.

Jim's academic success was not without effort as he was poorly prepared and had limited resources. Overcoming obstacles and with persistence, he completed a baccalaureate degree in Sociology from Eastern Washington University, eight years after graduating from high school. Wanting to help others with similar backgrounds and goals, he continued with his formal schooling, achieving a Masters in Educational Guidance and Counseling from Eastern Washington University and a Doctorate in Educational Leadership from Gonzaga University. In addition, he is a member of the 1999 graduating class of the Executive Leadership Institute sponsored by the League of Innovation, a nationally renowned organization.

Jim began his career in academia with the Chicano Education Program at Eastern Washington University, initially serving as Assistant Director in charge of recruitment and counseling and then as the Program Director. From there, he worked at Gonzaga University in Spokane as Associate Dean of Admissions and Director of Financial Aid. Realizing that the majority of non-traditional, first generation students that were struggling to access higher education were better matched with the community college system, he made the switch, becoming the Associate Dean of Academic Development Services at Columbia Basin Community College in Pasco, Washington. After five years in that position, he advanced to become Vice President of Student Services at Shoreline Community College in Seattle. After seven years, he moved back to Spokane, having accepted the position of Executive Vice President at the Institute for Extended Learning, one of the three educational institutions that make up the Community Colleges of Spokane. This position allowed Jim to realize his passion for serving the underprepared, underrepresented population as the Institute for Extended Learning specializes in programs of Adult Basic Education and English as a Second language and primarily serves the rural populations of the Greater Spokane area.

Jim spent the majority of his 25 plus years in academia with the community college system. Even after his retirement in 2006, he has served in various interim administrative positions with other institutions of higher learning. During his tenure in higher education, Jim honed his administrative and leadership skills and that is why he continues to be sought out to lend his expertise in various capacities.