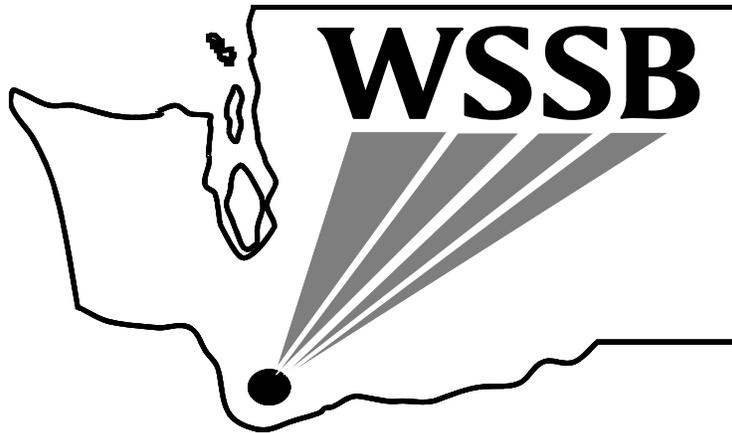


Strategic Plan

Washington State School for the Blind



“Providing World-Class Educational Services to the Blind and Visually Impaired both on Campus and Throughout Our State.”

July, 2007 – June, 2017

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“We will provide world-class educational services to the blind and visually impaired

Vision Statement

“Independence for Those Who Are Blind and Visually Impaired”

Mission Statement

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

Purpose Statement

The School 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.

Authority Statement

(Chapter 72.40 RCW) Since 1886, the Washington State School for the Blind, established by Territorial and State Authority, has provided comprehensive educational programs for students whose vision loss required special education programs.

RCW 43,06A	Safety of Children (ADD as per SSB 6361)
RCW 72.40	" " " " " "
RCW 72.40.010	School Established - Purpose
RCW 72.40.022	Superintendent - Powers and Duties (AMD -SSB 6361)
RCW 72.40.024	Superintendent - Additional Powers and Duties
RCW 72.40.028	Teachers' Qualification - Salaries
RCW 72.40.031	School year - School term - Legal holidays Use of School
RCW 72.40.040	Admission (AMD - SSB 6361)
RCW 72.40.050	Admission of Non-residents (AMD-SSB - 6361)
RCW 72.40.090	Transportation
RCW 72.41.040	Safety of Children (AMD - SSB-6361)
RCW 72.41.070	" " " " "
RCW 72.42.040	" " " " "
RCW 72.28.A.13	Special Education
PL 100-297	Federal Education for all Handicapped Children (State Operated Programs)
PL IDEA	Formerly PL 94-142
PL 99-457	Federal Education of Handicapped Children (Birth - six)

Values

- Comprehensive skill development and high expectations for each blind and visually impaired child to include: Braille, independent travel, social skills, use of technology, personal management, use of low vision aides, and job skills
- Literacy for all those who are blind and visually impaired
- Helping families support and understand their blind and visually impaired children
- Development of collaborative partnerships
- Effective and efficient use of resources
- Trained and competent personnel

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"
- 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.)
- 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

Agency Overview

PHILOSOPHY

WSSB believes all students have the right to a safe and stimulating learning environment and the right to an appropriate education. We also believe that all students can benefit from intensive short-term placement options and a menu of services that can be provided through partnerships with Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) and Educational Service Districts (ESDs).

Conceptually, the School for the Blind is like a revolving door that allows students to enter, learn a skill and exit back into their local district and then re-enter for additional intensive learning and then exit again. It is this ease of movement between LEAs, ESDs, and WSSB which helps improve the overall programs for the blind and visually impaired within the entire state. No one school or agency can accomplish what these children need without this spirit of cooperation and sharing.

COLLABORATIVE PROVISION

To initiate collaboration with groups or agencies interested in assisting visually impaired and blind youth in becoming independent and productive citizens to their fullest potential.

Agency Description

The school is nationally accredited by the Northwest Association of Accredited Schools and serves as a statewide demonstration and resource center providing direct and indirect services to students both on campus and in the child's local community. Services are provided to families, educators, blind consumers and others interested in assisting visually impaired youth in becoming independent and contributing citizens. **Independence** is probably the best single word to describe the school. As part of our mission, the school has worked with other agencies in becoming the Braille Access Center for the State which is helping open doors for blind consumers to a wealth of information that will help lead toward independence and future employment. An additional role the school fulfills is providing in-service and pre-service to educators through specialized training for those who are blind and visually impaired. As the population of our state has grown, this role has also expanded to meet the demands set forth by LEAs and ESDs from throughout our state. There is no teacher-training program for the blind and visually impaired in the state of Washington; therefore, the school helps fill this void. WSSB continues to explore the development of partnerships with university programs to reduce the tremendous lack of trained personnel within our state.

In fulfilling the School's Mission Statement and following the strategic plan the School continues in its direction of becoming a Center of Best Practices for services to blind children within our state, and demonstrating through empirical data that intensive short-term on campus programs, mixed with expansion and improvements in outreach services along with digital learning options will dramatically increase the quality of services for blind and visually impaired children. As component within the plan progresses, improvements in services to blind and visually impaired children will occur, as should the efficiency in statewide services. WSSB Outreach Mission continued to expand with the addition of the Statewide Instructional Resource Center for those children who are blind and visually impaired, (special funded grant from OSPI), expansion of the Statewide Technology Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired, and continued increases in partnerships to facilitate improved services for those who are blind and visually impaired statewide. These programs have proven to be not only extremely valuable to LEAs, ESDs, parents and children, but have also assisted districts in making better use of limited resources in improving the quality of services to children.

Over the years, WSSB has worked at consolidating various fragmented service delivery components for the blind into a very efficient one stop system that has made major improvements in reaching out to more children, families and local school districts. As part of the strategic plan, WSSB in partnerships with numerous organizations and agencies will continue to examine the networking of resources in order to better serve blind and visually impaired children.

Since 1990, WSSB has moved away from a program on the campus in Vancouver to a diverse statewide service delivery model. This has included: expansion of short-term intensive on campus programs, development of a Braille Access Center (braille production center), establishment of a statewide technology center for the blind, expansion in outreach direct and contractual service delivery to districts, acquisition of the Washington Instructional Resource Center and a tremendous expansion in production and distribution of materials, development of digital learning options (distance learning programs (piloting programs with a few partners throughout the United States), beginning work on regional program development, expansion of summer school options and career pathway work for students through collaborative partnerships, expansion of training programs and class and workshop offerings for those working with the blind, and the development of a public non-profit foundation to help meet the unmet needs of blind and visually impaired children. This is a small sample of some of the activities being facilitated by WSSB.

Blind/visually impaired students are entitled, under RCW 72.A.13, to an equal educational opportunity. RCW 28A.150.200 states that it is the paramount duty of the state to make ample provision for the education of **all children** within its borders. Furthermore, it is recognized that typical educational practice relies heavily on presentations which are predominantly visual in nature and, unless specially adapted, do not necessarily convey the concepts intended to the visually impaired student. (Research has shown that approximately 90% of what we learn is acquired through incidental learning, and that 90% of incidental learning is acquired visually.) Therefore, an emphasis on experiential learning needs to be a major component in the education of visually impaired/blind students wherever they are and these differences need to be recognized and considered.

The total educational program at WSSB is designed to facilitate the particular learning characteristics of the students enrolled. Likewise, all staff has been trained in working with visually impaired/blind students and are a tremendous state resource which needs to be more effectively utilized to provide quality services to students at WSSB and visually impaired and blind students throughout the state.

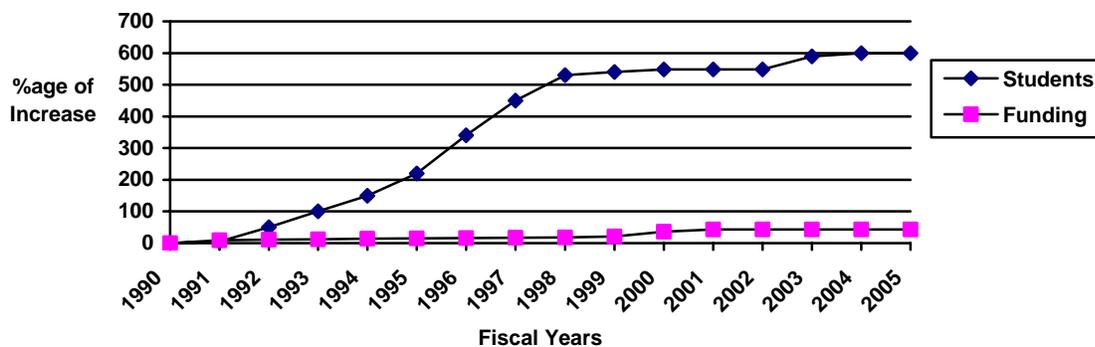
Continued diversification of services has resulted in efficiency gains and WSSB's ability to provide services to a greater number of children. WSSB has increased the number of children served since 1990 by over 600%. This number represents students receiving direct on-campus and itinerant/consultative services off-campus. Through diversification WSSB has improved on-campus services, developed an excellent partnership with LEAs, ESDs, OSPI, DSB and the private sector, and helped improve the quality of services to many children in local school districts (LEAs). The increase in students served would have been much greater over the past few years if we were able to fill needed positions throughout our state. (**Teacher shortage**)

The School also believes that the facilities need to be used efficiently. Whenever possible WSSB's facilities are open to the public for use. Currently over 50,000 people a year uses the School's facilities.

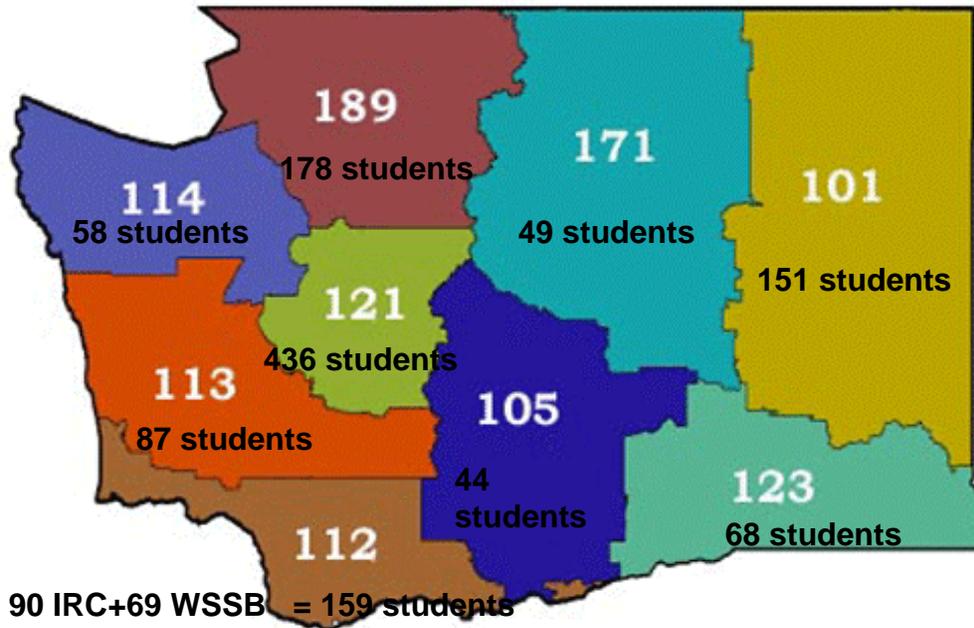
CLIENTELE CHARACTERISTICS

As the population of our state continues to increase, so does the need for services to blind/visually impaired children. The projected needs of students with visual disabilities from throughout the state have been analyzed and are consistent with national projections for this particular population of students. Approximately one tenth of one percent of the population is considered visually impaired. Using these national percentages it is estimated that approximately 1,000 blind and visually impaired children are enrolled in K - 12 education. Current data for the state of Washington place this number at approximately 1,230 blind and visually impaired children, ages 0 through grade 12.

Student Growth Compared to Growth in Funding



**1,230 Blind & Visually Impaired Students Served
in Washington by the IRC (birth-21+)**



WSSB provides approximately 600 vision-related services per month. Parts of these services are direct and consultative services to children. WSSB's request for services increases every year due to changes in service delivery, establishment of an excellent working relationship with LEAs, ESDs, and OSPI, and by helping to network resources within our state. This increase in service delivery has been provided in a very cost-effective manner through effective utilization of existing resources.

RCW 72.40.040 provides a free appropriate education to residents of the state between the age of three and twenty-one years who are blind/visually impaired. The school may also provide non-residential services to children age's birth through three who meet the criteria for blind/visually impaired. These blind/visually-impaired children represent the full continuum of service needs based upon their functioning level and other disabilities and are representative from all geographic areas of the state.

Major Assumptions

Population Trends

Over the past five biennia, the number of school districts requesting assistance for their visually impaired students has increased dramatically. This trend has continued for the past 13 years and has not begun to slow. This trend is due to an increase in blind/visually impaired children. The **shortage of trained teachers** has slowed the number of children receiving specialized services. School districts are beginning to realize that blind/visually impaired children have unique needs that require training by individuals with specialized skills. As the request for services continues to increase, the need for FTE flexibility as a school will become a major issue in helping to provide services. Currently, WSSB has been able to help local districts provide services through contracted services to pay for the additional FTE. This has not been at an additional cost to the state since funding is currently flowing to each district

through regular special education funds for the children we are serving under contracts. WSSB has done an excellent job of locating and utilizing existing resources. This has been evident over the past 13 years with an increase of over 600% with minimal requests for additional state dollars. However, if we are going to continue to meet the needs of children throughout the state, additional staff and supervisory positions need to be added. These positions will help establish programs that will be self-supporting and assist WSSB in intensifying on-campus programs, developing partnerships with LEAs and private providers in the development of more cost effective and efficient regional service delivery models, which will result in improvement of state services. Long term savings will occur as a result of these partnerships due to the more efficient use of personnel, equipment and materials along with reduced litigation due to lack of appropriate services within various regions in our state. The development of regional service delivery should also reduce the length of on campus programs for many children, which will result in increased number of children being able to access WSSB intensive on campus program in a timely manner.

Currently, there are 1,230 blind/visually impaired children at WSSB and in LEAs throughout our state. There are approximately 85 FTE trained teachers of the blind providing services to these children. This is a ratio of 1:17, however it is not factoring in the variable of geography and that many of these itinerants are traveling anywhere from 500 to 1,500 miles per week or that some services like Orientation and Mobility are provided on a one to one basis or that some situations require a 1:1, 1:4 ...etc. student to teacher ratios. Typical itinerant ratios range from 1:18 to 1:45. Creative solutions are needed in order to provide appropriate service. WSSB is helping fill this void through on-campus programs, outreach-direct services to students, staff training, and recruitment for LEAs and ESDs and cooperative partnerships. Technological advances will assist in helping to improve services to children in remote areas of the state. However, in order to accomplish this, funding must be provided to hire trained personnel to carry out this mission.

Service Needs

During the past thirteen years we have made some major gains in service delivery to blind students within our state, but this population of students is still receiving marginal services. This is mostly due to the low incidence of the disability with factors like geography, shortages of trained teachers to work with the blind, and a lack of cooperative resource sharing occurring, which could significantly improve services in an efficient and effective manner. Blind/visually impaired students are entitled, under RCW 72.A.13, to an equal educational opportunity. RCW 28A.150.200 states that it is the paramount duty of the state to make ample provision for the education of **all children** within its borders.

WSSB's ability to work with numerous partners in facilitating the wiser use of state resources and implementing new and creative approaches to old problems is the key to improved services both on campus and in the child's local community. The school has a reputation of making a difference for children throughout the state and helping to develop creative approaches to problems. The goals, objectives and strategies stated within this document will help WSSB provide, in partnership with many, **"World-class educational services to the visually impaired and blind."**

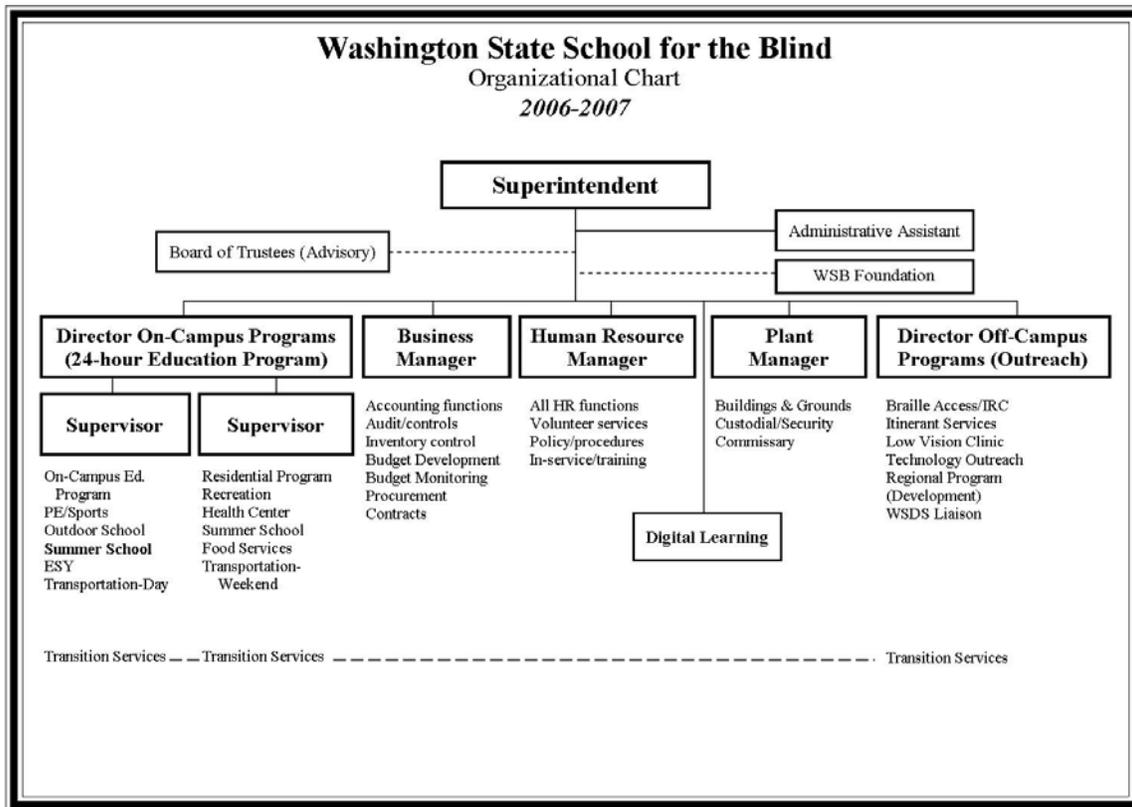
Outlined Needs

- Partnerships need to be expanded
- Consolidation of vision related services needs to continue to occur assisting in continued efficiency in service delivery throughout our state.
- Improved resource sharing
- Distance (digital) learning to facilitate special training for low incidence populations needs to occur. This will require some additional resources (staff and funding) in order to meet unmet needs of blind and visually impaired children throughout the state.
- Regional service provision for blind and visually impaired children needs to be expanded in order to provide appropriate services
- Improvements need to be made in the area of valid assessment instruments for the blind (modified WASL, etc). A valid performance measure of blind children is very difficult to ascertain from current instruments.
- Systems need to be developed to provide for support of variable populations and the funding for increases in these services – (e.g. day student transportation, week-end transportation, and high impact students on campus).
- Determination needs to be made as to whether WSSB is or is not a Local Education Agency (LEA) by both state and federal guidelines.
- Transportation changes need to be implemented to guarantee an inflation factor for increased costs that need to be funded and/or transportation cost need to be covered under the existing transportation allocation system under OSPI.
- Student safety needs to become a priority for the state with replacement of buildings and continued modification to facilities to improve learning environments and reduce the states liability.



“No one school or agency can accomplish what these children need without the spirit of cooperation and sharing through creative partnerships.”

Organizational Chart



Organizational Structure

The Washington State School for the Blind is a small state agency that provides statewide services from a base campus in Vancouver, Washington. Most personnel are located in Vancouver. However, a number of WSSB itinerant teachers of the blind are located in various communities throughout the state. WSB is basically a two tiered organizational structure with each manager/director/supervisor providing numerous services including direct services to children.

Board of Trustees:

- Nine Trustees representing their respective U.S. Congressional Districts are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. These individuals provide recommendation and advice to the superintendent and governor about services to blind and visually impaired children within our state.
- Five ex-officio trustees representing one union, (representing both certificated and non-certificated personnel), two blind consumer organizations, and parents provide direction to the board and superintendent.

Superintendent:

- Provides leadership and direction for the School and services for blind and visually impaired youth throughout the state in consultation with the board and other stakeholders.

Director of On-Campus Programs:

- Provides leadership, direction and direct supervision for the on-campus educational program. Also in charge of educational evaluations, curriculum development, inter-scholastics.

Director of Off-Campus Programs (Outreach):

- Responsible for off campus operations and services to blind and visually impaired children.

Coordinator of Digital learning:

- Provide leadership and direction both on and off campus with the expansion of digital learning options including distance learning, assistive technology options, workshop training options for adults working with children, etc.

Business Manager:

- Responsible for day-to-day efficient financial operation of the school including payroll, contracts, procurement, budget development/monitoring, capital project tracking, and internal controls.

Human Resource Manager:

- Responsible for all H.R. functions including safety programs, training, volunteer services, policy and procedural development.

Plant Manager:

- Responsible for daily operation of the physical plant, including capital project supervision.

Washington State School for the Blind 2007-2017 Goals

- I. Leadership - Promote and provide leadership in the development and improvement of quality services to blind and visually impaired children throughout the state of Washington. (On-campus and Outreach services)
- II. Academic Achievement - All students will be provided a stimulating, and safe environment that will lead toward high student achievement, and strong self-confidence and self esteem.
- III. Best Practice - Serve as a statewide center of best practice for information and services for blind and visually impaired children.
- IV. Service Provider/Parent Training - Enhance pre-service and in-service training for all vision related personnel and parents.
- V. Public Awareness - Increase awareness and educate the general public about blindness and visual impairment.
- VI. Communications - Improve communication with families and service providers involved in the education of blind and visually impaired children throughout the state.
- VII. Safe Environment - Provide safe, quality equipment and facilities for the education and training of children, parents and personnel.

“We will provide world-class educational services to the blind and visually impaired.”

GOAL: 1

Leadership - Promote and provide leadership in the development and improvement of quality services to blind and visually impaired children throughout the state of Washington. (On-campus and Outreach services)

OBJECTIVE: 1.1

Provide quality services that are cost effective and efficient in meeting blind and visually impaired children's needs.

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ Continually survey customers to determine on-going needs
- ◆ Survey customers for feedback on product and services being provided
- ◆ Examine service delivery models in providing the most effective and efficient delivery of services to children, families and local school districts.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ◆ Compile yearly customer feedback on future needs and direction for services.
- ◆ Eighty percent of WSSB customers will rate services and products at 4.0 or higher (on a scale of 5.0 being the highest rating).
- ◆ WSSB will report on at least one pilot service delivery projects each year to determine effectiveness. Effectiveness to be determined by student outcomes and cost effectiveness.

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: On-Campus 24-Hour Education Program – [below a few examples]

- Pilot program development such as the LIFTT Program (Living Independent for Today and Tomorrow), which was piloted at the request of LEAs to help student that have graduated, but don't have the CORE Competencies to be independent (blindness specific skills) gain these skills through short-term intensive on-campus program)
- Pre-school program which was piloted at the request of LEA to help meet the needs of a growing population of pre-school blind children in S.W. Washington.

OBJECTIVE: 1.2

Facilitate cooperative partnerships that promote improvements in efficient and effective quality services to blind and visually impaired children.

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ Expand collaborative partnerships with local school districts and Educational Service Districts.
- ◆ Develop Regional (satellite) Program provisions for children through direct or distance learning options.
- ◆ Expand partnerships with other state agencies.
- ◆ Expand partnerships with private sector agencies and organizations.

- ◆ Increase involvement in professional organizations that assist with the deployment of this objective.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ◆ Measurement of expansion will be determined by new partnerships and expansion of those already in existence.
- ◆ Track number of new regional services (direct or through distance learning).
- ◆ WSSB leadership staff will become more actively involved in professional organizations. Measurement to be determined by involvement and leadership within organizations.

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: Off-Campus Services to Students/Districts – through utilization of on-campus expertise as per NCLB (highly qualified) to help provide outreach functions as part of their daily schedule. Facilitated through digital learning options, workshops, etc.

OBJECTIVE: 1.3

Provide leadership in the development of safe quality state-of-the-art facilities that will meet the needs of children today and in the future.

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ Continue to develop the infrastructure to help facilitate expansion of digital (distance) learning programs.
- ◆ Gather information from WSSB safety committee in helping to maintain a safe state-of-the-art facility.
- ◆ Gather feedback from the Board of Trustees, consumer organizations and professionals in providing the type of services children need to be successful.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ◆ Submit yearly reports on the progress of WSSB's accreditation through NWASC.
- ◆ Track new digital (distance) learning program success rate.
- ◆ Provide feedback to the safety committee, staff and board on responsiveness on safety related issues.
- ◆ Track student progress in new programs and new facilities to determine change effect.

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: On-Campus 24-Hour Education Program (effective use of facilities on a 24 hour basis throughout the year including summer school options, teacher training, partnerships with various organizations to assist in meeting GMAP targets, and better serving students, families and local school districts.

OBJECTIVE: 1.4

Provide children with a safe and stimulating learning environment that will encourage independence and success.

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ Continue to implement WSSB's 10 year capital plan

- ◆ Continue to implement energy saving strategies designed to reduce operating cost those energy conservation and maximizing facility use and the collection of user fees.
- ◆ Utilize information from WSSB's Hazardous Mitigation Plan to reduce any safety related issues.
- ◆ Continue to implement curricular changes that meet children's/societies every changing needs.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ◆ Collect data of maximizing facility use, while reducing operating cost therefore re-directing limited resources to programs for children and assisting in meeting high inflationary cost for utilities and fuel.
- ◆ Gather feedback from children, parents and districts about the quality of WSSB's programs.
- ◆ Measure the number of children that have gained independent travel skills while at WSSB.
- ◆ Measure the success rate of students that graduate from WSSB.

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: On-Campus 24-Hour Education Program

OBJECTIVE: 1.5

Secure private and other public funding sources to help meet the needs of blind and visually impaired children throughout the state.

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ Expand volunteer coordinator role to assist with development of connections with community resources and a pool of volunteers and organizations.
- ◆ Work with the Washington School for the Blind Foundation to assist with fund raising.
- ◆ Hire or re-assign staff to assist in public awareness/relations to continue to improve services for children throughout the state and assist in fund raising.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ◆ Increase volunteers on campus and within the Instructional Resource Center to provide services to children.
- ◆ Number of private and public grants secured.
- ◆ List additional public awareness contacts that have been developed.

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: On-Campus 24-Hour Educational Program

OBJECTIVE: 1.6

Continue to expand accessibility options for all customers including blind children and adults.

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ Increase production through the Braille Access Center through additional partnerships.
- ◆ Increase the WSSB developed software for public use through downloads from the School's web site.
- ◆ Increase accessible information and links through the school's website.
- ◆ Increase digital learning options for consumers including web based resources.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ◆ Track production increases made possible through partnerships with WCCW, etc. Demonstrate cost savings through BAC production with the use of inmates as opposed to contracting for braille production.
- ◆ Track timely delivery of textbooks and materials to districts.
- ◆ Track web access to software and web based resources being utilized
- ◆ Track use of parent list serve usage
- ◆ Track digital classes developed and accessed.

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: Digital learning options and Braille Production and Distribution

OBJECTIVE: 1.7

Continue to explore additional service delivery models such as regional program development and expansion of Distance/Digital Learning options.

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ Hire staff to coordinate distance/digital learning programs.
- ◆ Secure funding to piloting of a regional program on the east side of the state in conjunction with other partners. (i.e. ESDs, LEAs, DSB, etc)
- ◆ Provide funding for program operations in these areas.
- ◆ Expand accessible curricular offerings to blind and visually impaired students from throughout the state. (secure additional state and private funding to expand digital options for students/families).
- ◆ Work in partnership with LEAs, ESDs, and other partners to develop a frame work to institute a regional service delivery model.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ◆ Track number of students using digital learning options and measure success.
- ◆ Track the increase number of digital courses and web based information made available.

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: On-Campus 24-Hour Educational Program & Off-Campus Services to Students/Districts

Appraisal of External Environment:

Statewide impact will result in providing services to those students not receiving services and being able to improve service delivery through the use of technology and effective partnerships. (Piloting of a regional partnership and expansion of technological options for service delivery are part of this change in service delivery which will meet the needs of children at less cost than expansion of residential programs. Program development in these areas has come from input from throughout the state consumers for the need to more service options and

to address ways of filling the gaps between sparse service delivery that is often the case with an itinerant model – especially when it comes to CORE Competencies in the area of education of the blind).

Trends in Customer Characteristics:

Due to increased information being provided by WSSB and the establishment of numerous partnerships, blind and visually impaired children previously not identified and not served or under served are in need of service. Parents are also becoming better educated about their rights and their children's rights to an appropriate education. The end result is a need to expand services and reexamine how services have been provided. The state of Washington has long underestimated the needs of those who are blind and visually impaired. If we are going to make a difference in the lives of these children, we need to provide appropriate services, which should result in a reduction of the high unemployment (70%) as adults. Student population within the state is approximately 1,400 blind and visually impaired children, many who have multiple disabilities requiring more intensive services. Effective service delivery on campus has proven to be very successful with between 76 – 87% success rate for graduates. Modification and increases in funding to implement various digital and regional initiatives should assist in increasing the outcomes for those students in the local districts.

Strategy and Capacity Assessment:

WSSB continues to examine new ways of efficiently and effectively providing intensive services to children, parents, local districts throughout our state. The school sees a continued growth in service delivery over the years with major expansion in service delivery occurring through outreach programs, distance learning, major emphasis on five year program for children from local districts that do not have the skills to be independent, and expansion of short-term intensive programs. Flexibility needs to occur that will allow WSSB to expand outreach services (contractual with districts), in the area of acquisition of additional FTEs, authorization to expend additional contractual funds without being penalized for efficient and creative use of both state general fund dollars and contractual funding. On a limited basis WSSB might be able to contract for some positions after civil service reform is completed. However, incentives need to be put in place to do this. Currently, all the incentives are in hiring personnel, due to the fact that traditionally the only place where increases in funding occur is in the area of cost of living increases (COLAs). Usually, goods and services (contracted) services are reduced and/or inflation is never put in place for these services. Therefore, contracting out becomes a disincentive. Technology will assist WSSB in reaching more students through Distance Learning, however additional funding will be needed to effectively implement a program that will be one of the more effective ways of reaching unserved and underserved children within our state.

The LIFTT program has been highly effective, but additional funding needs to be secured to provide for weekend coverage for this one program, which is key to employment job training options for 5th year students.

Regional program development has begun, but in order to move this area forward funding will need to be secured to develop a working relationship for will be able to continue from one year to the next.

Discussion of Major Partners:

WSSB is currently working with ESD 105 and local school districts in the greater Yakima area to develop a strong partnership that will result in a regional service delivery model for blind and visually impaired children. This model will help the region improve services, gain some stability

with trained teachers of the blind through a support system of cooperative resource sharing and help meet the needs of children that are not being served or are underserved. This pilot and partnership will be used to determine the efficacy of expansion of this model in other parts of the state that are experiencing similar problems. WSSB has also developed partners in the area of digital learning with the Digital Learning Commons (DLC) and is providing leadership and assisting in the development of a Digital Portal for the Blind (DLPB), which will facilitate on-line accessible learning for the blind, those working with the blind, and family members. Partners for this project, which is being privately funded, come from: Boston, Chicago, Phoenix and Vermont.

Financial Plan Assessment:

Objectives and strategies under this goal will result in increased services to those who are blind and visually impaired through expansion of cooperative partnerships with a variety of agencies and organizations. This will result in increased costs to the state, but at much less expense than expanding programs at Vancouver's WSSB campus to handle students that could be served in a regional program. Due to the low incidence of blindness (one tenth of one percent), service delivery in Washington is very difficult. A more cost efficient and effective model of service delivery is a regional approach. Those students needing more intensive services attend WSSB for a short period of time, but have inadequate programs or no programs in their local area to return to once their skill levels are such that they should be able to compete in their local districts.

GOAL: 2

Academic Achievement - All students will be provided a stimulating, and safe environment that will lead toward high student achievement, and strong self-confidence and self esteem.

OBJECTIVE: 2.1

◆ **Maximum student achievement of individualized Education Programs (IEP).**

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ Provide intensive services to children both on campus and in the local community based upon the IEP.
- ◆ Set high expectation for student learning based upon realistic expectations.
- ◆ Examine new ways of providing services to children in order to maximize individual learning.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ◆ Measure yearly student achievement.
- ◆ Conduct pre-test and post test to determine student's yearly growth.
- ◆ Work with OSPI in developing a valid WASL (Washington Assessment for Student Learning) test for blind students. The current WASL is a visually bias test and does not provide a valid measure for blind and visually impaired children.

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: On-Campus 24-Hour Educational Program

OBJECTIVE: 2.2

- ◆ Students graduating from WSSB will be successful.

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ One year after graduation students will be surveyed to determine outcome. (Students will be tracked for 8 years after graduation). Trend data from year to year will be analyzed to assist in making curricular changes and program service delivery changes.
- ◆ Upon completion of high school, WSSB students will be surveyed to determine program satisfaction.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ◆ One hundred percent of WSSB graduates will be connected with transitional services.
- ◆ WSSB employment rates of graduates will be benchmarked against available national data (target goal is 100% success).
- ◆ Eighty percent of WSSB students will rate WSSB programs 4.0 or higher on a Likert scale with a high of 5.0).

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: On-Campus 24-Hour Educational Program & Intensive Training Opportunities

OBJECTIVE: 2.3

- ◆ **Students will be competent in the use of technology that provides access for successful integration into our society.**

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ Staff will be provided training on current technology in order to facilitate student learning.
- ◆ Students will be exposed to current technology and develop appropriate skills.
- ◆ WSSB will provide students with current access technology as part of "Best Practices"
- ◆ WSSB will develop and maintain the infra-structure necessary to meet this objective.
- ◆ WSSB students returning to LEAs will be provided access equipment which will return to the LEA with the student as part of an active transition program.
- ◆ WSSB will work with the Washington School for the Blind Foundation which has agreed to provide technology to graduating seniors at WSSB. Would like to see this program expand throughout the state.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ◆ Staff will be surveyed on training needs and provided training.
- ◆ Students will be assessed on technology to determine competency. Increases in student competencies will be measured based upon a grade equivalent to the year's growth.
- ◆ Percentage of private funding will be tracked to provide access equipment for students upon return to their LEA.

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: On-Campus 24-Hour Educational Program & Off-Campus Services to Students/Districts

OBJECTIVE: 2.4

- ◆ Maximize student skills in the areas of daily and independent living to allow for successful integration into our society.

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ Provide training to residential staff on various aspects of specialized training for blind and visually impaired children in all aspects of daily/independent living skill.
- ◆ Expand cottage cooking program to include evening meal preparation.
- ◆ LIFTT (5th year program) will be expanded through increased awareness with LEAs, parents, and students; this will also require an additional cottage (living environment).
- ◆ Expand partnership with DSB to assist with the implementation of the 5th year program.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ◆ Pre-test/post test measures taken to determine student growth in one year period in the area of daily living skills.
- ◆ Student successful transition to work or post educational experiences will be gathered. (target: 100%).
- ◆ LIFTT program will expanded by 50%. (number of students served)
- ◆ LIFTT student success rate will be reported on a yearly basis with a 5 year follow up also being conducted.

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: Intensive Training Opportunities

OBJECTIVE: 2.5

- ◆ Assist students in developing positive self-image and self-confidence.

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ Students will be provided opportunities for recreation and leisure activity that build character.
- ◆ Students will be involved in the QUEST program.
- ◆ Students will be actively involved in volunteer programs and community based work experience and/or career awareness functions.
- ◆ Students will have the opportunity to actively participate in interscholastic activities.
- ◆ Counseling will be provided as needed

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ◆ Parent surveys will be conducted to determine changes in their child's self-image and self-confidence.
- ◆ Student surveys will be conducted to determine positive self image.
- ◆ Data will be collected on the number of students involved in self esteem building programs such as recreation, sports, music, etc.

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: Intensive Training Opportunities

OBJECTIVE: 2.6

- ◆ **WSSB will work with local districts to increase academic achievement.**

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ WSSB will extend digital (distance) learning options to LEAs through outreach services.
- ◆ WSSB will develop new programs unique to the blind and visually impaired that will be digital based courses.
- ◆ WSSB will provide intensive summer school training for students that haven't access the intensive on-campus programs during the school year.
- ◆ WSSB will increase short-course offerings – either on campus and/or through digital learning.
- ◆ Continue to increase materials, equipment and supplies through the IRC.
- ◆ Expand workshops for staff working with students to increase staffs skills. This will be partially done by using WSSB on-campus staff that meet NCLB (highly qualified) to provide additional training.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- ◆ Survey information data collected from LEAs on quality and success of services provided.
- ◆ Track number of students attending summer programs
- ◆ Track number of teachers/paraprofessionals attending workshops.
- ◆ Quality data through surveys will be collected in all areas.

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: Off-Campus Services to Students/Districts

OBJECTIVE: 2.7

- ◆ **Expand short-term option programs for students at WSSB.**

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ WSSB will expand on campus short-term course offerings per year.
- ◆ WSSB will reduce on campus stay time for students.

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: On-Campus 24-Hour Educational Program

Appraisal of external environment:

Providing a safe environment where children feel secure to learn is a paramount duty of the state. WSSB like other schools throughout the state continue to raise the level of expectations being placed upon students and staff. In order for children's performance to improve, staff need to be provided the necessary tools to make this happen and a staffing ration needs to be maintained based upon individual students needs that can provide for the safety of all children.

Trends in customer characteristics:

Children attending WSSB on-campus program come from throughout the state and have been referred by parents, local districts, Children's Protective Services and etc. These children are in need of intensive programs that will assist them in gaining the skills that will allow them to re-integrate into their local school system and be successful. Data gathered by WSSB over the past few years has shown that children that receive a holistic program can be successful

and overcome great obstacles in our society. In order for this to occur all the basic needs of the child must be met, which includes providing a safe and stimulating environment for learning.

Strategy and Capacity Assessment:

Continued emphasis will be placed on intensifying short-term placement options at WSSB. This will increase rotational on-campus enrollment and probably increase transportation costs. Changes in state law need to occur that will place WSSB daily and weekend transportation system under the OSPI transportation allocation system. Currently, there is no flexibility in meeting the needs of additional students being transported. A flat transportation funding system does not work! As on campus 5th year program options increase, an independent living center building needs to be constructed to meet the demand. This is in the 10 year plan and needs to move forward to facilitate this program. Technology – distance/digital learning options will tremendously increase the number of off-campus students being served. Some of these services may be possible to provide on a contractual basis. However, a combination of start up funding will be necessary to put in place a system that should be self supporting in a number of years through tuition fees. WASL-WSSB and other partners are going to have to convince OSPI and its test publishers that removing visual bias or replacing visual bias questions with questions that measure the same concept in a non visual way are imperative. Without these changes blind and visually impaired children will continue to be discriminated against in our statewide high stakes assessments.

Financial Plan Assessment:

In order to intensify on campus programs and provide a safe and stimulating environment, safety of children needs to be paramount. Additional staffing is being requested as part of a decision package to improve safety for children in the residential program and help meet training needs. The success of this program will mean that WSSB will be able to serve more children in a shorter period of time by shortening the on-campus program time while providing a safe and stimulating environment.

Goal: 3

Best Practices: - Serve as a statewide center for best practice for information and services for blind and visually impaired children.

OBJECTIVE: 3.1

- ◆ Provide leadership in the development of access technology for blind and visually impaired children.

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ Provide technical support and training in the use of adaptive technology to all visually impaired/blind children and staff working with children within Washington.
- ◆ Continue to field test equipment to determine best practice, reliable equipment, software in relationship to accessibility and access.
- ◆ Continue to expand partnerships to help facilitate access to assistive technology for all blind and visually impaired children.

- ◆ Work on securing private and funding to supplemental state funds.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ◆ Feedback collected through customer satisfaction survey.
- ◆ Track number of trainings provided to those working with the blind each year.
- ◆ Provide data on the success rate of children using assistive technology and the change (growth) in knowledge children acquire within one year through intensive training.
- ◆ Tracking total costs and determining percentage covered under private funds.

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: On-Campus 24-Hour Educational Program & Off-Campus Services to Students/Districts

OBJECTIVE: 3.2

- ◆ **Provide textbooks, adaptive equipment, and materials in a timely manner to LEAs throughout the state.**

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ Provide textbooks to students when needed, provided LEAs order material in a timely manner.
- ◆ Provide LEAs with adaptive equipment as available from WSSB/IRC.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ◆ Materials provided to district 100% on time when orders are placed in a timely manner by the districts.
- ◆ Increase the availability of adaptive equipment for loan to districts through private and public partnerships by 25%.

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: Braille Production and Distribution

OBJECTIVE: 3.3

- ◆ **Develop a cost effective and efficient system for the sharing of resources (equipment, textbook, and materials) for the state.**

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ Expand partnerships with other agencies to efficiently meet this goal.
- ◆ Merge WSSB library with the Instructional Resource Center (IRC) on campus to reduce any duplication and make more efficient use of all statewide materials/equipment.
- ◆ Merge tracking of American Printing House for the Blind (APH) quota court to the IRC database system.
- ◆ Establish a student registration fee for local district use of materials and equipment through the IRC in order to meet current and future district needs.
- ◆ Expand Volunteer services to assist with material development.

- ◆ Continue to gain efficiency through expansion of computerized database tracking systems that have been developed at WSSB.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ◆ Survey clients on satisfaction on the delivery and quality of materials.
- ◆ Track the expansion of public and private partnerships
- ◆ Track inmate production and costs in comparison to public purchase price for materials
- ◆ Track materials delivered on time.

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: Braille Production and Distribution

OBJECTIVE: 3.4

- ◆ **Assist in the facilitation of research to promote and improve services and service delivery models to blind and visually impaired children.**

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ Continue development of a digital distance learning model that can meet many of the needs of blind and visually impaired children and teacher of the blind with classes and appropriate training.
- ◆ Expand digital learning partnership through additional contacts with other service providers and private funding sources.
- ◆ Pilot a regional (satellite) service delivery model.
- ◆ Expand partnership with the Dept. of Services for the Blind in the area of transition services for young adults.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ◆ Field test the feasibility of various distance learning classes for blind and visually impaired children and teachers of the blind.
- ◆ Track the number of distance learning classes.
- ◆ Provide a quality measure through data collection and the use of an appropriate survey instrument.

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: On-Campus 24-Hour Educational Program & Off-Campus Services to Students/Districts

OBJECTIVE: 3.5

- ◆ **Assist in the development of appropriate assessment instruments to measure academic achievement of blind and visually impaired children.**

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ Work with OSPI and Teacher of the Blind throughout the state to develop a special version of the WASL to more adequately assess blind children. (Current WASL tests are highly visual and not a valid measure for blind/visually impaired children).

- ◆ Develop a rubric that will assist in the evaluation of various assessment data to provide a level of independence factor or score.
- ◆ Hire a new psychologist that will gain the necessary training to be the assistive testing expert for our state in relationship to blind and visually impaired children.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ◆ Set a date for the completion of a modified version of the WASL and the piloting of this instrument with blind students.
- ◆ Determine effectiveness of the rubric used to compile assessment data into a unified factor or score.

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: On-Campus 24-Hour Educational Program & Off-Campus Services to Students/Districts

Appraisal of External Environment:

Unequal statewide services exist to those who are blind and visually impaired. We hypothesize that some of this lack of service is due to lack of information or the ability of the general public to easily access information and services. Through cooperative partnerships expansions of appropriate services can occur in the most cost effective manner.

Trends in Customer Characteristics:

Customers for services come from all areas of the state and need access to information in a timely and non-confusing manner. Customers are becoming better educated and not only deserve quality services but also expect these services. Staying current with technology can be very difficult and expensive. WSSB future plans and proven practices have demonstrated that through cooperative ventures, public/private partnerships and negotiating with vendors on a statewide basis for adaptive devices cost efficient service can be implemented. Likewise, textbooks in Braille are very expensive (up to \$12,000 for one book). Through resource sourcing and the use of volunteers WSSB/WIRC assists districts throughout the state in locating and obtaining a large percentage of these expensive books at a minimal cost. Replacement and training of volunteers and expansion of partnerships is paramount if we are to insure literacy for blind children throughout our state. (i.e, WSSB has worked with WCCW in the development of a braille transcription service, which was been very effective). In order to meet the continued need for services, distance learning must be made available for low incidence populations such as blind and visually impaired children in classes that are special to their needs. This same service needs to be made available to teachers working with these children and with parents.

Strategy and Capacity Assessment:

Technology will not replace people in this important area, but will allow us to continue to expand services in an efficient and effective manner. Partnerships formed through the Department of State Printing, Corrections, and Department of Information Services will allow WSSB to increase materials in accessible format for students and adults throughout our state. Civil Services Reform will allow us to expand the amount of contracted work in the production of these materials. WSSB continues to raise the bar on a national basis in regard to the use of a digital environment in providing high quality services and access to blind and visually impaired children. Additional funding in this important area would be one of the best

investments the state could make. Results over the past seven years have proven that student with excellent skills in a digital environment can be successful. WSSB's data is approximately a 180 degree positive from national unemployment results. Expansion of digital learning and regional program options will assist WSSB in increase outcome results for students off campus.

Discussion of Major Partners:

Effective partnerships with most of the organizations and agencies providing services to those who are blind and visually impaired will help us in providing quality cost efficient and effective services to children throughout the state.

Financial Plan Assessment:

Strong partnerships will assist WSSB in being recognized as a hub of service delivery for those who are blind and visually impaired within our state. Resource sourcing and sharing is the only way to make efficient use of the expensive equipment, and materials necessary to educate the blind and visually impaired children of our state. Additional dollars placed with WSSB in the development of a Center of Best Practice will reduce over-all taxpayer expenditures by more efficiently using both human and material resources. The implementation of a distance learning program through WSSB will be much more cost effective and better for children than trying to expand services on campus to meet children's needs. The state has invested in the infra-structure at WSSB to facilitate distance learning, which needs to be followed with the operational funding.

GOAL: 4

Service provider/parent training – Enhance pre-service and in-service training for all vision related personnel and parents.

OBJECTIVE: 4.1

- ◆ Assist in the development of a model that will provide a pool of highly qualified teachers of the blind and orientation and mobility specialist for our state.

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ Establish partnerships with University teacher training programs to meet the need for trained teacher of the blind
- ◆ Facilitate the use of WSSB's campus for practicum sites for student teachers and for university classes.
- ◆ Work with OSPI and Pacific Northwest states in collaborative efforts to train teachers of the blind.
- ◆ Explore the options of starting a training program for teachers and paraprofessionals working with the blind within our own state system.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ◆ Track expansion of new partnerships.

- ◆ Track number of newly trained teachers of the blind and orientation and mobility instructors within Washington.
- ◆ Secure additional funding through university/WSSB/State of Washington partnerships to provide for additional trained teachers of the blind/O&M specialist for our state.

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: On-Campus 24-Hour Educational Program & Off-Campus Services to Students/Districts & Intensive Training Opportunities

OBJECTIVE: 4.2

- ◆ **Expand training opportunities for parents of blind and visually impaired children.**

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ Work with Dept. of Services for the Blind “Child and Family Division” to expand opportunities for parent training.
- ◆ Services need to be expanded to families of young blind children. Currently this is under the DSB, however direct services are not being provided throughout the state and need to be expanded.
- ◆ Work with blind consumer organizations to provide training personnel at their state conferences.
- ◆ Provide training through regional meetings and through distance learning.
- ◆ Collect data from parents on needed training.
- ◆ Host or co-host a parent/sibling weekend retreat.
- ◆ Develop parent course offerings in a digital environment.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ◆ Track number of trainings provided and location of trainings.
- ◆ Work with DSB on collecting data on the quality of services being provided to parents/children (birth – three).
- ◆ Increase workshops for parents and families.
- ◆ Collect quality survey data on training provided.

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: On-Campus 24-Hour Educational Program & Off-Campus Services to Students/Districts & Intensive Training Opportunities

OBJECTIVE: 4.3

- ◆ **Assist with the facilitation of yearly training opportunities for services providers throughout the state.**

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ Gather data on statewide in-service needs. This will be done by WSSB or in concert with other agencies and organizations.
- ◆ Provide WSSB facilities for training site
- ◆ Facilitate distance learning training options
- ◆ Collaborate with other state agencies and the private sector on training options within our state.

- ◆ Coordinate training throughout the state to reduce any duplication of services.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ◆ Yearly in-service schedule will be established and with other agencies and organizations to gain statewide efficiency.
- ◆ Quality measures taken with each in-service. WSSB will maintain at least a 4.0 level of satisfaction within a scale where 5.0 is the highest rating.

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: On-Campus 24-Hour Educational Program and Off-Campus Services to Students/Districts

OBJECTIVE: 4.4

- ◆ **Gather input from customers throughout the state on their in-service needs.**

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ Use the IRC database to survey all stakeholders (school districts/TVIs throughout the state) as to in-service needs.
- ◆ Gather requests for in-service from parents in cooperation with the Department of Services for the Blind's Child and Family Services.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ◆ Report on the type of workshops being request and the success rate of these programs.

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: On-Campus 24-Hour Educational Program & Off-Campus Services to Students/Districts

OBJECTIVE: 4.5

- ◆ **Expand partnerships with university programs to improve training options within our state.**

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ Partner with various university programs in securing federal teacher training grants.
- ◆ Increase the offerings of AP type courses in partnership with the University of Washington that will be accessible for blind and visually impaired students.
- ◆ Expand partnerships with digital learning providers – especially in the area of accessible specialized training for students, parents and those working with the blind.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ◆ Track increase in service delivery partnerships
- ◆ Track quality data on services provided.

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: Off-Campus Services to Students/Districts

OBJECTIVE: 4.6

- ◆ **Design Digital/Distance Learning classes/services for parents.**

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ Survey parents to assist in determining parents training needs.
- ◆ Develop web clips that can be easily utilized by parents in teaching various concepts to their children.
- ◆ Promote access and use of the parent list serve for use by parents only.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ◆ Track number of specialized curriculums developed along with specialized products.
- ◆ Track increase use of parent list serve

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: Intensive Training Opportunities

Appraisal of External Environment:

The school needs to serve as a revolving door in assisting to provide quality services. We realize that not all students can or should attend school at WSSB. Therefore, it is important that a coordinated effort be made to maximize all resources in the development of quality services statewide. This includes assisting in reducing the high vacancy rate for teachers of those who are blind and visually impaired.

Trends and Customer Characteristics:

WSSB has built a very strong relationship with parents, LEAs, ESDs, OSPI and blind consumer organizations. Each of these groups feels it is important to maintain a strong continuum of services for those who are blind and visually impaired. In order for this to happen, WSSB needs to continue to develop partnerships with various agencies and organizations in providing leadership and training.

Strategy and Capacity Assessment:

Expansion of training opportunities for teachers, para-professionals, and parents will be increased due to the ability to contract out for services under the provisions of Civil Service Reform. Continued work on WSSB's capital facilities will assist in having facilities that can meet the needs of all stakeholders on a seven days a week, 12 months of the year basis. Technology, primarily through distance/digital learning will allow WSSB to reach more parents and educators for training purposes in a cost effective manner. Start-up funding needs to accompany the huge capital investment that the state has made in WSSB's facilities to efficiently actualize the investment. On-going financial support will be necessary in the area of curriculum and services delivery in order to reach a larger percentage of non and underserved in our state.

Discussion of Major Partners:

Major partners in providing quality statewide services are OSPI, Governor's Office and OFM, the Legislature, parents, blind consumer organizations, LEAs, ESDs, and other organizations interested in promoting independence for blind children. Without the cooperation of all these agencies and organizations, this task becomes much more difficult.

Financial Plan Assessment:

The need for services to those who are blind and visually impaired in our state outweighs our ability to provide services based upon human resources. On-campus population at WSSB has been at a 20-year high over the last four years. Waiting lists are not uncommon; therefore, we

must figure out additional ways to provide quality services. If space, staff, and funding were available we could easily exceed 120 on-campus students. However, this would be a very expensive service and would not always be in the best interest of all students. We believe that the school provides quality services that should be short term with options being provided throughout the state in the child's local community. In order for this to happen, resources need to be provided to facilitate this cost effective approach. We believe that some of this can be done through increased partnerships with university programs and establishment of distance education programs for teachers and students through the use of the K-20 system.

As population of children continues to increase we also need to be able to provide a supply of highly qualified teachers of the blind. Locating these teachers and recruiting them to Washington can be very difficult. Most university graduates already have jobs before they complete their programs.

GOAL: 5

Public Awareness – Increase awareness, and education the general public about blindness and visual impairment.

OBJECTIVE: 5.1

- ◆ Implement an awareness campaign designed to increase all consumer's knowledge about WSSB and services to blind children throughout our state.

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ Hire or re-staff in the area of information officer to facilitate increase awareness about WSSB and its mission.
- ◆ Develop materials that will be made available on a statewide basis.
- ◆ Develop strategies to utilize public radio and television informing the public about the needs and abilities of the blind.
- ◆ Increase partnerships.
- ◆ Increase Board of Trustees involvement in public awareness in their respective congressional districts.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ◆ Track number of presentations WSSB is conducting each month.
- ◆ Track increases in WSSB partnerships from year to year.

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: On-Campus 24-Hour Educational Program & Intensive Training Opportunities

OBJECTIVE: 5.2

- ◆ Utilize state-of-the-art technology to facilitate improvements in awareness of services and programs.

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ Increase WSSB presents on the internet for increased awareness of the general public.
- ◆ Increase public awareness through statewide presentations.
- ◆ Increase the general public use of WSSB facilities.
- ◆ Increase partnerships with public and private agencies and organizations.
- ◆ Increase awareness about WSSB and the needs of blind children to our elected officials and other state agencies.
- ◆ Work with the WSB Foundation to increase awareness and access to services by all blind and visually impaired children and families throughout our state.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ◆ Conduct random survey of special education directors to test LEA awareness of WSSB services.
- ◆ Conduct random survey to determine statewide parent awareness levels. Conduct awareness activities of other state agencies and elected officials
- ◆ Provide a yearly tracking on out-side user groups of facilities and percent of increase over the previous year.

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: On-Campus 24-Hour Educational Program & Intensive Training Opportunities

OBJECTIVE: 5.3

- ◆ **Increase staff participation as speakers to civic groups and state and national conferences.**

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ Staff will present at blind consumer conferences.
- ◆ Staff will present at state professional vision conferences.
- ◆ Staff will present at national meetings and conferences.
- ◆ Staff will present at parent meetings.
- ◆ Encourage staff to become active participants in civic and professional organizations.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ◆ Number of conferences presentations will be tracked on a yearly basis.
- ◆ Qualitative data will be collected on presentations.
- ◆ Track percentage increase of staff involved in civic and professional organizations.

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: Off-Campus Services to Students/Districts & Intensive Training Opportunities

OBJECTIVE: 5.4

- ◆ **Continue to expand WSSB's interaction with the community and throughout the state.**

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ Increase WSSB partnerships and involvement with other organizations and agencies.
- ◆ Increase WSSB's awareness throughout the state.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ◆ Increase partnerships by 20%.
- ◆ Increase WSSB's awareness through the public media by 20%
- ◆ Track public awareness functions conducted by WSSB on a yearly basis.

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: Off-Campus Services to Students/Districts & Intensive Training Opportunities

Appraisal of External Environment:

Lack of awareness of appropriate services throughout the state has resulted in numerous children being provided limited to no specialized services. New ways of providing services to low incident populations such as blind and visually impaired children (one tenth of one percent) need to be explored and pilot sites of new service provision need to be field tested.

Trends in Customer Characteristics:

Customer base is being better educated and aware of what are quality services. This will help all of us raise the measuring stick. Hopefully, Washington will be willing to provide the resources to make this possible.

Strategy and Capacity Assessment:

WSSB will work in conjunction with the School's Private Foundation to increase awareness of WSSB's services throughout the state. This should result in increased numbers of students receiving services in numerous ways. WSSB does not see Civil Services Reform as impacting this area at this time. Technology will assist WSSB in its' awareness campaign. This is an area in which WSSB needs to place more emphasis. However, due to limited funding, the school has always directed most funds into direct services with children. This has become a catch 22. WSSB believes this is the right thing to do, however if we don't provide enough public awareness it seems to effect the school's funding level (support) and therefore we are put into an awkward situation.

Discussion of Major Partners:

The only way we will be able to raise the measuring stick for those who are blind and visually impaired is through effective partnerships. The sharing of resources (both human and fiscal) will be a key to the success.

Financial Plan Assessment:

Increased public awareness means more individuals being made aware of services that children should be provided under both state and federal law. This will result in increased requests for services, which will mean a need for additional resources.

GOAL: 6

Communications – Improve communication with families and service providers involved in the education of blind and visually impaired children throughout the state.

OBJECTIVE: 6.1

- ◆ Gather input from customers throughout the state on ways of improving communications.

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ Utilize the K-20 system (internal) to facilitate improved communication
- ◆ Expand Web site
- ◆ Expand distance learning options.
- ◆ Expansion of survey information for input from stakeholders.
- ◆ Staff will communicate with parents of children regular basis.
- ◆ Establish a system to facilitate virtual visits by parents to classrooms.
- ◆ Work with OSPI to see if the state vision consultant position should be under the umbrella of WSSB in partnership with OSPI. We believe this will assist in improvements in efficiency in our state's communication and service delivery system and help streamline process and eliminate some duplication while at the same time improving communication.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ◆ Gather feedback from various targeted groups on awareness of WSSB's programs and services.
- ◆ Provide classes in the area of distance learning that will improve services to children, districts and parents.
- ◆ Expand web access to services for parents and those providing services to the blind.

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: On-Campus 24-Hour Educational Program & Off-Campus Services to Students/Districts

OBJECTIVE: 6.2

- ◆ Improve quality survey instruments in gathering information from all stakeholders and provide feedback mechanism.

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ Refine data collection instruments to guarantee that solid feedback is being provided to WSSB.
- ◆ Implement WSSB purchased computerized survey tracking software.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE:

- ◆ Feedback from various groups will be gathered as to use of information being mailed

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: On-Campus 24-Hour Educational Program & Off-Campus Services to Students/Districts

OBJECTIVE: 6.3

- ◆ Increase public awareness in child's local community regarding activities and programs at WSSB.

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ Work with the School for the Blind Foundation in facilitation of public relations information and awareness of services provided by WSSB.
- ◆ Establish a media (newspaper) clipping program at WSSB, whereby articles on WSSB students will be mailed to local newspapers.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ◆ Track the number of contacts made outside of WSSB to WSSB's students home districts.
- ◆ Track the number of informational items that make it into local newspapers and television and radio stations.

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: On-Campus 24-Hour Educational Program & Off-Campus Services to Students/Districts

OBJECTIVE: 6.4

- ◆ Actively inform local districts about all services that they are receiving from their partnership with WSSB.

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ As part of the outreach team's goals, make sure that comprehensive information is shared with the LEA about the services they are receiving through contractual arrangements with the School for the Blind.
- ◆ Conduct annual informational meetings throughout the state, primarily at regional ESD Special Education Director's meetings.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ◆ Increase information flowing to districts by 5%.
- ◆ Conduct at least 4 regional informational meetings per year.

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: Off-Campus Services to Students/Districts

Appraisal of External Environment:

In order to provide a safe environment and one that is stimulating to students and staff, good communications much occur. As programs change and expand, staff on-campus and customers throughout the state must be aware of services and feel comfortable at communicating their needs. Developing communication links throughout the state with all stakeholders is a key to future improvements. Currently WSSB contracts and provides services to about one-fifth of the school districts in the state. This was not only done because we don't have room on campus for all these children, but also because we believe all children have the right to move freely from one environment (WSSB campus) to their home district and back when more intensive services are needed.

Trends in Customer Characteristics:

Due to WSSB's novel approach at developing strong partnerships and eliminating artificial barriers, the school has been recognized on a national basis as a model program for other states to follow. This has been done with a fraction of the resources which many states have had access to. Our goal is to continue to provide quality efficient services, which are customer based, menu driven (no one right and only one way to provide service) concept. Customer ratings of the school have been very high ranging in the area of 4.0 to 4.5 on external customer ratings with 5.0 being the highest rating.

Strategy and Capacity Assessment:

Technology will assist WSSB in gathering information to effectively address stakeholder's needs. This will not result in a reduction in the need for personnel to implement this service. Currently in our state, we believe that efficiencies could be gain and improved communication could occur by having the state vision consultant assigned to WSSB. WSSB is already recognized at the Hub of Service Delivery for the state and facility of Best Practices. Placing this position under WSSB would be a tremendous factor in helping to improve statewide services through OSPI advocacy in accomplishing needed task in a timely manner.

Discussion of Major Partners:

Both the public and private sector partners will play a vital role in the success of increasing communication. Increased communication usually results in increased requests for services, new ideas in providing and improving the quality of service, increased efficiency and raising the measuring stick in the performance of blind children.

Financial Plan Assessment:

WSSB has had a reputation of getting \$3.00 worth of service for every \$1.00 spent. The only way we have been able to expand services by over 600% since 1990 with limited new funding was through effective partnerships, collaborative agreements and contracts. We feel we have maximized existing resources for children. In order to meet the growing demand, additional resources will be necessary.

GOAL: 7

Safe Environment – Provide safe, quality equipment and facilities for the education and training of children, parents and personnel.

OBJECTIVE: 7.1

◆ Provide a state-of-the-art facility that allows for the safe, efficient and effective use of educational strategies in improving children and staff performance.

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ Implement WSSB's 10 year capital project plan, which is designed to provide for the safety of children and help met future program needs.
- ◆ Continue to examine each project for program efficacy and energy efficiency.
- ◆ Expand partnerships with law enforcement as part of WSSB's safety plan.

- ◆ Continue to implement issues on the school's Hazardous Mitigation Plan.
- ◆ Continue to implement issues on the school's Sustainability Plan.
- ◆ Fund the physical education building, which has already been designed and passed through the city of Vancouver Building department.
- ◆ Provide a facility to expand on the LIFTT pilot program's success and demand for services.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ◆ Complete capital projects on time and within budget.
- ◆ Collect data on energy efficiencies gained

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: On-Campus 24-Hour Educational Program

OBJECTIVE: 7.2

- ◆ Implement the school's ten year plan, which is based upon feedback from all stakeholders.

STRATEGIES:

- ◆ Replace buildings that are seismically not stable.
- ◆ Implement WSSB's school technology portfolio plan.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- ◆ While waiting for funding to replace buildings that are not seismically stable, implement temporary bracing to reduce potential injury in the event of an earthquake

ACTIVITY INVENTORY: On-Campus 24-Hour Educational Program & Off-Campus Services to Students/Districts

Appraisal of External Environment:

WSSB capital projects are driven by life, safety, accessibility, and programs for children.

Trends in Customer Characteristics:

WSSB does not plan on any major expansion of on-campus residential students. Our energy and resources continue to be based upon wise use of exiting resources by WSSB and approximately 40,000 others that use our facilities each year. In order to help meet statewide expanding needs, WSSB plans to utilize new technology to provide more outreach through distance learning and year-round campus utilization for students, parent training, teacher and para-professional training.

Strategy and Capacity Assessment:

Capital facility work has been implemented based upon WSSB's 10 year plan, which has been designed to provide safe and efficient services to stakeholders throughout the state. Implementation of this plan will continue focus on information of the 10 year plan, with added information from the school's Hazardous Mitigation Plan, and Sustainability Plan. The state needs to move forward with the funding of the P.E. replacement building which is seismically unstable. The design has been completed, all plans have moved through the city building

department, funding needs to occur to reduce the state's liability and provide a safe environment for children and for the training of those working with the blind.

Discussion of Partners:

WSSB has been interested in developing partnerships with any group that will assist in building stronger programs for those who are blind and visually impaired.

Financial Plan Assessment:

The state has been very good at assisting WSSB in providing a safe environment for student and staff. WSSB has worked with OFM on capital projects, which will reduce our consumption of energy resources and assist WSSB in meeting state and federal laws for life, safety and accessibility. Additional capital projects will be requested (see capital projects) to assist in year-round programs and environmental control, distance education, and energy management.

All strategies are connected to the statewide result “to improve student achievements in elementary, middle, and high schools.”

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT:

The below performance assessment is based upon data collected as part of WSSB's Balanced Scorecard, GMAP, National Accreditation Reporting Process, School Improvement Plan, School Technology Plan, Technology Portfolio and other accountability process that are in place at this time.

A001 Percentage of Washington State School for the Blind customers who rate services and products at 4.0 or higher.

Assessment for this performance measure will be conducted at the end of the school year (June)

A002 Percentage increase in Braille transcription services.

Assessment for this performance measure will be conducted at the end of the school year (June)

Percentage of Braille transcription delivered to customers on time.

This measure was put in place during the last quarter and progress for that quarter indicates transcription was delivered on time 100% of the time. Our target was 97%.

A003 80% of Washington State School for the Blind students will meet their Individual Education Plan targeted goals.

Assessment for this performance measure will be conducted at the end of the school year (June). In the 2004-05 school year, 85% of students met their IEP goals.

A004 50% of Washington State School for the Blind high school students are enrolled in on-line classes.

Enrollment in on-line classes was substantially lower due to the departure of an employee and our inability to fill the position. This position will be filled as of July 2006.

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The Washington State School for the Blind receives support, concern and encouragement from parents, local community and a variety of state-wide organizations. We would like to thank all the individuals and groups who have provided input into the development of this Strategic Plan. Realizing our plans and dreams would be impossible without the many who contribute so much to our efforts.

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Key words:

- Awareness, accountability, measurement
- Regional program development
- Quality assurance – being response to stakeholders within 24 hours
- Need for residential programs – as one option for children
- Program expansion and options for children’s and families
- Shortages of trained personnel
- Parent education and early childhood intervention

PROCESS:

Information for this plan is the result of a culmination of data from numerous stakeholders over many years, including the results from self-studies as part of National Accreditation through the northwestern Association of Schools and Colleges.

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much” Helen Keller

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