



# STRATEGIC PLAN



FY2017 - 2021

# **IBESDB STRATEGIC PLAN FY2017-2021**

The Idaho Bureau of Educational Services for the Deaf and the Blind (IBESDB) is an integral part of Idaho's overall system of quality education. This plan describes the vision, mission and desired educational outcomes for youth with sensory-loss. The IBESDB is established as a separate governmental entity with the primary goal of assisting school districts and state agencies in providing accessibility, quality and equity to students in the state with sensory impairments through a continuum of service and placement options.

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Brian G. Darcy, Administrator

## **VISION STATEMENT**

Education, communication and independence for life.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Mission of the Idaho Bureau of Educational Services for the Deaf and the Blind is to serve students by enhancing the continuum of innovative educational services, programs, and placement options with commitment, passion and a unique understanding of the individuals we serve. Our skilled team provides direct and indirect services to children / students age 0-21, families, Idaho school districts, and Idaho State agencies through our unique statewide and campus services and programs in 5 critical domains: information and referral, assessment, programs, curriculum and parent/family/community involvement.

# IBESDB GOALS & OBJECTIVES

## **Goal 1 – DELIVER BEST EDUCATION SERVICES - Develop, adopt and promulgate uniform and system-wide academic models defining best practices in the delivery of academic services to respective clients.**

Objectives for Delivering Best Education:

1. The IBESDB will look to provide Supplemental services as described in Statute. Program offerings will be developed with guidance based on response related to the needs survey reports as conducted and completed in Goal 3. Data and responses from the needs assessments will drive the following performance measures:

- Recognize the reduction in available trained staff specifically dealing with the Education and habilitation of Students who are Blind/Visually impaired, and/or Deaf/Hard of Hearing. Idaho will look to be a leader in the Northwest for recruitment and retention of trained professionals.

Benchmarks:

- Prioritize funding requests to emphasize need for retention and recruitment, efforts will include but not be limited to a legislative request for the purpose of funding a more competitive adjustment of the salary schedule for Certified Teaching Staff.
- At least one representative from ALT will visit a training program or higher education program for the preparation of teachers for the Deaf and for the Blind, annually.
- Identify Professional Development as a priority for assistance in retaining trained 21<sup>st</sup> century teachers.

2. Direct efforts at continuous improvement in programming that support student growth.

Performance Measures:

- Student growth data from early childhood and K-12, using pre-/post- assessments, and progress towards their individual goals as established on the IEP.
- Participation in Statewide School Improvement Programs, (e.g. Wise Tool, PBIS)
- Continue development of the ISDB CORE Curriculum project for aligning Common Core State Standards (CCSS) with Independent Living Skills Guidelines at all grade band levels including assessments for tracking student skill growth, and begin implementation.
  - Provide orientation and training for staff to gain understanding of CCSS.
  - Begin implementation of Core Curriculum and assessment for individual student growth.

- Continue building a practice of using multiple measures for assessing students and monitoring progress at all grade levels.
  - Core Curriculum assessment records, Aimsweb, individual student's IEP goal progress and achievement rates, Preschool Language Development Rubric, Early Childhood Oregon Project-aligned developmental Rubric (for BVI)
- Continue development of standards-aligned units of instruction for content areas at all grade bands.
- Continue professional development in use of technology as an instructional tool in the classrooms at all grade levels.
  - Commit resources to continually increase, replace and support technology in the classrooms.
  - Provide mentoring for staff in increase capacity to apply technology as a tool for instruction and learning.
- Expand Short Term programming for BVI and DHH students in Idaho in a variety of areas (BVI, summer camps, Work Readiness...)
  - Develop and calendar of offerings and a rotation schedule for year to year events.

**Benchmarks:**

- Early childhood data places ISDB toddlers and children with vision or hearing loss within the range of age-appropriate developmental skills.
- Student growth measure evidence one year growth or more per year of school for at least 75% of the population.
- Meet target goal activities at both the District and School levels of the Wise Tool.
- Efforts and progression on this project will be made public via reports to the Board of Trustees as well as a working documented report published on the IBESDB web site.

3. Engage parents in activities that increase their knowledge and their child's achievement.

**Performance Measure:**

- Planned events will be offered in each region and on campus to offer a variety of opportunities to obtain information, training, education and support.

**Benchmark:**

- Parents representing different communication, literacy and placement choices will indicate 90% satisfaction with student learning opportunities and program goals via surveys and polls taken at IEP/Parent Teacher Conferences.
- 70% of parents will annually attend and participate in one or more planned events and individual educational planning activities.

4. Many students who have graduated do not possess the skills necessary to live/work independently. As a result, in the most recent years there has been a shift in an effort to improve this outcome. As part of this continuing effort, IBESDB will look to maintain, increase and scaffold independent living activities depending on current needs areas.

Performance Measures:

- Independent Living Skills Curriculum Checklist
- Workshop surveys
- Planned and created Curriculum Units
- Participation in Post-Secondary Transition Planning/Services as established both in the Outreach and on ISDB campus.

Benchmarks:

- Develop and implement workshops for students, staff, and parents.
- Workshops for teachers, cottage staff, and parents earn high marks for satisfaction and usefulness (on a 5-point rating scale, 90% equals 4 or better).
- Increase referrals to partner agencies, specifically the Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and the Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Targets will be set at 100% referral of applicable students within two years of graduation, as measured by Case Management tracking system.

5. Direct agency efforts at continuous improvement in post-graduation outcomes.

Performance Measure:

- Post-graduation data
- Partner with ICBVI specifically to reconcile numbers to provide seamless transition to Post Secondary services when applicable.

Benchmarks:

- The numbers of ISDB graduates will be tracked and reported in the following categories:
  - Percent of college/program completers (Numbers gathered through Survey and Transition Program)
  - Percent of long-term employment rates (numbers furnished through ICBVI/IDVR)
  - Percent of individuals with supported living needs placement

- The numbers of Blind and Visually impaired students will reconcile with the numbers served by ICBVI to demonstrate a referral for post-secondary services as applicable.

## **Goal 2 – EXPAND ACCESS - Provide access for students and staff to skills, knowledge and community services.**

Objectives for Access:

1. Continue to update equipment and staff training to support innovative use of communication/computer technologies for student learning. This is being established to improve overall access to assistive technology by all students, for communication, mobility, reading/writing and access to information.

Performance Measure:

- Use of established communication centers and technologies, for the purpose of maintaining contact with parents, making appointments, and other independent living needs.
- Use of technology in the classroom in accordance with state statute, with appropriate accommodations made for each student's needs per their IEP, if applicable.

Benchmark:

- “Innovative” technology strategies increase annually in each teaching team.
- Student’s evaluations as performed by teachers in Independent Living Skills (or other) class settings will demonstrate full independence in use of appropriate communication technologies or demonstrate improvement toward independence on a rubric scale before exiting the individual’s IEP and school programming.
- Annual review to be published on website which will outline IBESDB’s efforts in the classroom and through outreach services, for meeting the goals and recommendations of the Task Force for Improving Education

2. Continue and increase efforts to train and mentor educational interpreters who are seeking further training and are working with students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing in a public school setting. .

Performance Measure:

- Number of trained, certified educational interpreters working with students in the public school setting who meet appropriate levels as established by 33-1303 and 33-1304

Benchmark:

- Through cooperation with respective LEA, State Department of Education and Certifying bodies, IBESDB will develop a tracking system to ensure students have access to educational opportunities through trained/certified interpreters.
- As tracking system is in place, IBESDB will operate as clearinghouse for ongoing training and certification opportunities, with a goal of hosting one such opportunity per year.

3. Continue and increase efforts to train and mentor paraprofessional and teachers who are seeking further training and are working with students who are visually impaired.

Performance Measure:

- Video Conferencing Log: workshop participation
- AT Training Log
- Reinstating on campus paraprofessional training
- Develop new resources for increasing the numbers of Teachers for the Visually Impaired (TVI) and Certified Orientation and Mobility Instructors (COM) in Idaho.

Benchmark:

- 75% of paraprofessionals and teachers working in LEAs with Blind/Visually impaired students will be enrolled in the NLS training with the goal of passing literary Braille transcription exam by February 2017.
- Through partnerships with various Higher Education Institutions, develop pathways and provide at least two students per year who will apply for continuing education for either a TVI or COMS program through these partnerships.
- IBESDB will offer a paraprofessional training for working with students who are Blind and Visually Impaired on an every other year, minimum, schedule.

**Goal 3 – UNDERSTAND NEEDS - Conduct an objective and reliable comprehensive data gathering project to identify and better understand client and stakeholders needs and expectations concerning the continuum of current and potential other services.**

Objectives for Understanding Needs:

In an effort to address statute 33-3403 (2) goal requirement of providing a “continuum of service and placement options” and providing accessibility, quality and equity in these services, and to address the future direction and program development of program offerings, IBESDB will Conduct an objective and reliable comprehensive data gathering project to identify and better understand client and stakeholder needs and expectations.

Performance Measures:

- Over the period of this Plan, the project will proceed with the following activities:
  - a. Identify relevant needs sectors:
  - b. Develop best practices standards for obtaining objective, actionable and unbiased needs reporting and ensuring statistical reliability and validity.
  - c. Develop comprehensive needs surveys for the respective needs sectors.
  - d. Develop comprehensive stakeholder sample lists for the respective needs sectors.
  - e. Develop an on-going protocol and strategy for administration of surveys.
  - f. Administer needs surveys.
  - g. Analyze and report results.

Benchmarks:

- Efforts and progression on this project will be made public via reports to the Board of Trustees as well as a working documented report published on the IBESDB web site.
- The expectation is an average of response to the initial surveys will be at 50%.

**Goal 4 – PROMOTE ENTITY SERVICES - Deliver educational, habilitation and information programs and services in a manner which makes effective and efficient use of resources, while reaching the greatest number of students/families/schools.**

Objectives for promotion:

1. IBESDB will utilize a variety of marketing techniques to increase awareness and participation in IBESDB programs to target audiences.

Performance Measure:

- Establish updated, accessible website. Promote current programs and upcoming seminar, services and contact information via website and social media.

Benchmark:

- Website will be updated to new IBESDB.org address. Links to appropriate authorized social media accounts will also be established. (i.e. Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, etc.)
- Website will be accessible to widely used screen reader technologies.
- Will be maintained to provide updated and accurate information on current contact and entity information.

2. Continue to promote continuum of services. Focus attention on providing consistent, equitable services, statewide.

Performance Measure:

- IBESDB Protocol has been recently established and will be followed consistently throughout the state while providing services in each of our Educational Centers.

Benchmark:

- Follow up survey as established in Goal #3 will include consistency. Face to Face anecdotal information with various stakeholders will be checked for consistency

3. Continue and increase collaborative partnerships to increase service availability, improve networking, and minimize duplication.

Performance Measure:

- IBESDB directory of contact information, meeting schedules and joint activities (including training)
- IBESDB will maintain contact and membership with national organizations with like service delivery and educational interests.
- IBESDB will maintain collaborative relationship with other state entities who provide services to students or continue services upon graduation from IBESDB services, including but not limited to the State Department of Education (SDE), Department of Health and Welfare – Infant Toddler Program (ITP), Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (IDVR), Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CDHH), Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ICBVI) and all Idaho School Districts.

Benchmark:

- Directory is to be reviewed annually for 2-1-1 alignment.
- IBESDB will maintain annual membership and participation with Councils of schools for the Blind (COSB), and Conference of Educational Administrators of Schools and Programs for the Deaf (CEASD)
- IBESDB will maintain appropriate agreements annually with SDE, IDVR, ICBVI and others as applicable.

### **Goal 5 – GROW REVENUE - Development of a program to identify, develop and optimize external sources of revenue on a sustained basis.**

Objectives for Growing Revenue:

With funding limited to a fluctuating economy and demands for external program funding, IBESDB will look to develop a program to identify, develop and optimize external sources of revenue on a sustained basis. This development will be to supplement any General and Federal Fund awards.

Performance Measure:

- IBESDB will look to develop increased external revenue through development over a period of time. Efforts will focus on:

- a. A comprehensive legacy giving program
- b. A comprehensive program to identify, qualify and solicit large contributions from single donors.
- c. Identification of and qualification for application for corporate, philanthropic and government grants.
- d. A comprehensive PTO program focused on and responsible for a sustainable source of small gift projects to fulfill needs of modest scope.
- e. Identification, development, and marketing of innovative and profitable products and services as a sustainable source of on-going revenue.

**Benchmark:**

- Increase revenue from external sources at a rate of .5% (of General Fund allotment) per year.
- Establish cooperative marketing campaign with IBESDB Foundation to provide clear and effective procedures for legacy giving, corporate, and single donations.
- Development of a viable and current alumni directory.
- Establish/update materials clarifying legacy giving procedures and memorial efforts.

## **Key External Factors:**

### *Referral of Students from LEAs:*

Many LEAs in their efforts to provide a free and appropriate education in what they believe is a least restrictive environment are waiting too long to refer students for the level of services available at the campus center. Many students transfer to ISDB with minimal language and literacy competency, a history of failure, a sense of inadequacy and social isolation presenting difficult “odds” for success.

### *Funding vs. Increased Demand:*

State funding to support IBESDB goals and objectives had been cut by over 14% in prior fiscal years. Funding has demonstrated a slight incline, however, the increase has not kept up with the demand for services and an increase of 62% of student population served by the continuum over last five years. Recent budget cuts to local school districts have also placed a demand on the need for direct service to our students who are currently placed in their home district.

### *Public, Charter, Private, Parochial, and Virtual Educational Entities:*

IBESDB Outreach Education Specialists make recommendations to the local, primary educators of a child/student with sensory loss. The educational entity’s decision to apply or disregard professional recommendations meant to affect change for the student is voluntary— there is no effective process of negotiation or appeal.

### *Competition for limited number of available and trained staff:*

There has been a significant decrease in the numbers of teachers graduating from accredited programs which specifically train teachers of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing and Blind/Visually Impaired. As a result, there has been an increased competition between states and programs specifically located in the West. Idaho, once a leader in Salary and Benefits for trained teachers, has seen very limited employee CEC for the last 7 years. Because of this, Idaho has had difficulty in recruitment and retention of qualified/certified staff.