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| TSBVILogoScalable | Texas School for the Blind and Visually ImpairedOutreach Programs[www.tsbvi.edu](http://www.tsbvi.edu) | 512.454.8631 | 1100 W. 45th St. | Austin, TX 78756 |

Coffee Hour – September 3, 2020

**Proactive Advocacy for Students who are Blind and Visually Impaired**

Presented by Kimberly Avila, PhD, TBVI, COMS

# Poll: Tell Us About Your Role. Are You a:

1. Parent, guardian, grandparent, caregiver
2. Individual who is blind/visually impaired
3. Teacher of students who are blind/visually impaired
4. Orientation and mobility instructor
5. Other service provider in the blindness field
6. General/special education teacher, assistant, or other school professional
7. University faculty
8. Other
9. A combination of more than one of the categories above

# Agenda

* Proactive v. reactive advocacy
* Planning for:
* Procurement
* Accessibility
* Accommodations
* Implementation
* Needed skills
* Personnel

# Proactive v. Reactive Advocacy

• Although we cannot plan for everything, certain circumstances can be addressed proactively.

# Proactive Planning in COVID-19

• Examples:

* Highly contrasting and tactile physical distance markers
* Plexiglas barriers with contrasting edges, placed with ADA compliance
* Provisions and clear plans for non-drivers to access curbside and parking lot waiting room services

#  Procurement and Accessibility

* **Reactive**: TBVIs are expected to address all accessibility issues and “retrofit”  accessibility in platforms, programs, media, and documents
* **Proactive:**
* Developers embed accessibility into the programs and media
* School systems procure accessible programs
* More students can equally access all content and educational media

# Document Accessibility

* Reactive: TBVI is expected to retrofit accessibility into school and teacher made materials
* Proactive: Schools train personnel to author accessible materials to provide equal access for more students and promote greater independence

# Example: Class Schedule

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Class** | **Start Time** | **End Time** |
| 1 | 8:00 | 8:55 |
| 2 | 9:00 | 9:55 |
| 3 | 10:00 | 10:55 |
| 4 | 11:00 | 12:30 |
| Lunch | Lunch A 11:00Lunch B 11:30 | Lunch A 11:30Lunch B 12:00 |
| 5 | 12:35 | 1:30 |
| 6 | 1:35 | 2:30 |

* **Example: Is this accessible?**

Figure : The same school schedule as above, but presented in image format

# Accessibility Advocacy

## Proactive:

* Accessible media, programs, textbooks, applications, materials are created, purchased, and used in classrooms
* More students have better and more timely access and experience greater independence

## Reactive:

* Purchase, implement, create, and use items without verifying accessibility
* Only respond when one complains
* Attempt to retrofit accessibility, at a serious cost of time, resources, and possibly the student’s learning

## Accessibility

* Accessible materials, devices, and media make all the difference for students, but requires a team and proactive approach

# Learn More

* [Learn How: Microsoft: Training Teachers to Author Accessible Content](https://techcommunity.microsoft.com/t5/it-resources-training/training-teachers-to-author-accessible-content/m-p/78137)
* [Creating and Hosting an Accessible Online Presentations](https://www.levelaccess.com/webinar-series-making-communications-accessible-for-remote-audiences-resources/)
* [Creating Accessible Emails and Social Media Posts](https://www.levelaccess.com/webinar-series-making-communications-accessible-for-remote-audiences-resources/)
* [Creating Accessible Digital Documents](https://www.levelaccess.com/webinar-series-making-communications-accessible-for-remote-audiences-resources/)
* [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)](https://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/)

# Question

How can your student be involved in this process?

# Proactive Student Self-Advocacy

How many TBVIs have said: “SPEAK UP for YOURSELF!”

Successful advocacy requires an effective two-way communication system and open responsiveness from other parties.

# Proactive Advocacy is Respectful

* Respectful and Facilitates Communication
* Considers students’ backgrounds and personalities
* Allows for various communication strategies that are FERPA compliant
* Highlights the difference between communication and comprehension

# Self-Advocacy Scenario

* Me: On which computer do I sign out my daughter?
* Office staff: “On the computer **THAT SAYS** STUDENT SIGN OUT!”

# Student Advocacy

* Teacher Scenario: Smartboard and accessible material access

# Proactive Advocacy

* Requires Planning, Organization, and Communication
* Meet with teacher in advance to discuss vision and accommodations
* Set up a plan with the student to access the accommodations
* Ex. Screen sharing: student obtains access code before class, initiates screen share
	+ Student picks up braille copy of notes at door or they are posted in online class system
* Have the materials organized and easy to access

# Planning as a Team

* Student, TBVI, teachers meet in advance of the school year and on a regular basis to:
* Determine what is coming up
* Order any materials, books, devices
* Student locates and downloads items when possible
* Imperative for college students!

# Proactive Advocacy with ECC Example

* Use a calendar/planner
* Electronic, paper, which ever works best for the student
* Enter deadline, assignment, test, appointment, class
* Set a reminder/alert
* Edit as needed
* Check calendar for upcoming assignments and plan to meet the deadline

# Proactive Planning: Digital Access

# Proactive Planning for Technology Distribution

* Reactive approach: distribute devices, then recall for customized settings, IEP approved accommodations, and needed technologies on each, such as screen reader
* Proactive approach:
* Devices are verified for accessibility
* Administrative rights have been addressed to allow customized settings, app/extension download, various IEP technologies are installed

# Proactive Planning: Technology Use and Instruction

* Braille instruction
* Include digital access to braille for life-long access
* Braille displays
* Braille notetaker
* Accessible media, books, content, websites, apps

# Digital Skills Table

* Skill
* Adaptation
* Technology use
* Keyboard command, gesture

# Sample of Digital Skills

* Launch the online classroom
* Login to the online classroom
* Navigate around the screen: focus on the key items found around the digital classroom and use a pattern to help orient your students
* Customize settings and accessibility options within a digital classroom, web- browser, or app
* Download and organize classroom content
* Open, create, edit, navigate, save documents, and assignments
* Launch, pause, rewind and fast forward videos and methods to access synchronous course recordings to review content
* Follow links to external sites and navigate a variety of websites
* Submit assignments
* Access graded assignments and any feedback provided
* Access, read, and post on discussion boards or other classroom social media experiences
* Access to the classroom calendar, or another digital or paper planner, to set reminders and alerts for synchronous sessions, manage due dates, and track related service appointments and so much more.
* Procedures for how and where to ask questions
* Launch and login to synchronous web-conference programs, use mouse, keyboard commands, gestures, and other methods to turn on/off microphone, turn on/off webcam, virtually raise hand, post in chat box, communicate through polls and emojis, access captioning and ASL services.
* Methods to manage synchronous and asynchronous course requirements. Some students may need graphic organizers, prompts, electronic alerts, and clear schedules to help them differentiate between synchronous and asynchronous tasks and assignments and those that are required and optional. Many online classrooms contain an abundance of resources that add to the complexity of the environment. Consider a simplified table or organizer that helps your student define required from optional.

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| **Skill** | **KBC/****gesture/****mouse** | **Adaptation** | **Completes with guidance and prompts** | **Completes with some guidance and prompts** | **Completes independently across multiple settings: generalized** |
| Turn on computer  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Launch AT program  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Navigate or use command to launch online classroom app or browser  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Logs into classroom  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Navigates around online classroom: focus on the key items found around the digital classroom uses a pattern to navigate  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Customize settings and accessibility options within a digital classroom, web-browser, or app  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Downloads online content  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Organizes downloaded content  |  |  |  |  |  |

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| **Skill** | **KBC/****gesture/****mouse** | **Adaptation** | **Completes with guidance and prompts** | **Completes with some guidance and prompts** | **Completes independently across multiple settings: generalized** |
| Open, create, edit, navigate, save documents and assignments  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Launch, pause, rewind and fast forward videos and methods to access synchronous course recordings to review content  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Submits assignments  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Retrieves and attaches completed assignments to the appropriate place  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Links completed work with assignment submission location  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Checks that assignment posted correctly  |  |  |  |  |  |

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| **Skill** | **KBC/****gesture/****mouse** | **Adaptation** | **Completes with guidance and prompts** | **Completes with some guidance and prompts** | **Completes independently across multiple settings: generalized** |
| Access graded assignments and any feedback provided  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Follow links to external sites and navigate a variety of websites  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Access, read, and post on discussion boards or other classroom social media experiences  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Access to the classroom calendar, or another digital or paper planner, to set reminders and alerts for synchronous sessions, manage due dates, and track related service appointments and so much more  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Procedures for how and where to ask questions  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Skill** | **KBC/****gesture/****mouse** | **Adaptation** | **Completes with guidance and prompts** | **Completes with some guidance and prompts** | **Completes independently across multiple settings: generalized** |
| Launches and login to synchronous web- conference programs  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Turns on/off microphone on the platform and on the system  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Adjusts microphone volume  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Adjusts headset and/or speaker volume  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Positions microphone optimally  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Tests audio and microphone settings  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Virtually raise hand  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Turns on/off webcam  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Navigates to and posts in chat box  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Reads chat box messages  |  |  |  |  |  |

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| **Skill** | **KBC/****gesture/****mouse** | **Adaptation** | **Completes with guidance and prompts** | **Completes with some guidance and prompts** | **Completes independently across multiple settings: generalized** |
| Communicates through polls  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Accesses captioning and ASL services  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Uses phone in option for web- conferences when sound or internet are not working  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Utilizes organization methods to manage synchronous and asynchronous assignments  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Differentiate between synchronous and asynchronous assignments  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Manages, checks for and posts in time for deadlines  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Reports accessibility issues  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Opens and read emails  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Responds to necessary emails  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Files emails  |  |  |  |  |  |

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| **Skill** | **KBC/****gesture/****mouse** | **Adaptation** | **Completes with guidance and prompts** | **Completes with some guidance and prompts** | **Completes independently across multiple settings: generalized** |
| Flags emails for follow up  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Manages email address book  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Create and address emails  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Attaches files to emails  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sends emails  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Forwards emails as needed  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Replies to individual emails  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Replies all to emails when appropriate  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Differentiates when reply sender or reply all is warranted  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Differentiates when emails should and should not be forwarded  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Reports suspicious and inappropriate content in email and online learning; knows the proper person to report these issues to  |  |  |  |  |  |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **KBC/****gesture/****mouse** | **Adaptation** | **Completes with guidance and prompts** | **Completes with some guidance and prompts** | **Completes independently across multiple settings: generalized** |
| Accesses sent file to refer to emails previously sent  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Retrieves and accesses filed emails for reference  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Participates in group work both asynchronously and synchronously  |  |  |  |  |  |

# Proactive Advocacy: Personnel

* Please: Advocate for and help recruit more service providers in the field of blindness and vision impairment