

BIG SPRING SCHOOL DISTRICT

Newville, Pennsylvania

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF THE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2010

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I. CALL TO ORDER

The Committee of the Whole of the Board of School Directors for the Big Spring School District met in the Big Spring High School Large Group Room, Room 140, at 7:03 P.M. with President Wilbur Wolf, Jr., presiding. Five (5) directors present: Wilbur Wolf, Jr., President; William Swanson, Vice President; Robert Lee Barrick, Secretary; Tarin Houpt; and William Piper.

Terry Lopp, Treasurer; Kingsley Blasco; Richard Norris; and Richard Roush were absent.

Others in attendance: Richard Fry, Superintendent; Jeanne Temple, Assistant Superintendent; Kevin Roberts, Director of Curriculum/Instruction and Educational Technology; Erica Dolson, The Sentinel; and Brenda Line, Board Minutes. Also present: Ryan LaMontague.

II. PRESENTATIONS

Mr. Roberts and Mrs. Temple offered a PowerPoint presentation entitled "Big Spring High School, Dual Enrollment/Online Learning, School Board Presentation, Monday, February 15, 2010." Please refer to the following attached document: Dual Enrollment and Online Learning 2.15.10 with DE.pdf.

A. Dual Enrollment – Mrs. Jeanne Temple, Assistant Superintendent

Mrs. Temple reviewed the dual-enrollment portion of the PowerPoint presentation, Slides 1 through 8, including an overview, rationale, courses, funding, program status, and future goals.

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II. PRESENTATIONS (Continued)

The following items were noted in addition to the PowerPoint presentation:

A. Dual Enrollment (Continued)

1. College in the high school is offered to juniors and seniors (Slide 5).
2. HACC's cost of \$50 per student is the "best deal in the state right now." The funding received for the dual-enrollment program as outlined in Slide 6 is received from the State via a dual-enrollment grant application for funds. The grant is written based on the course offerings, the estimated number of students taking the course, the estimated cost of books, and the tuition fee (\$50 per student). Mid-year, end-of-year, quarterly, and final expense reports are required for this grant; therefore, there is a cost over and above the cost shown on Slide 6.
3. Students complete the dual-enrollment courses during the regular school day.
4. The dual-enrollment courses qualify for the high-rigor classes required by the Race to the Top initiative.
5. Course textbook retention by the District is addressed on a case-by-case basis. If students would benefit from the textbooks in the future, the books are given to the students to keep; if not, the District keeps the textbooks for the following year. For example, students kept the textbooks for the agribusiness course; however, the District kept the textbooks for the world history course.
6. At this time the District pays for the extra cost for the courses that are not covered by grant monies or student fees. Next year, the Race to the Top monies could pay for the cost difference.
7. Course credits earned in the dual-enrollment courses are transferable from HACC to all State universities and several private schools.
8. Grant monies may not be used to pay for the one-time \$35 student college admission fee. The one-time admission fee is waived for students who qualify for free and reduced lunches, and those students are not required to pay the admission fee if they choose to attend HACC after high school.
9. HACC's tuition fee is expected to increase to \$90 per student next year.
10. The course fee for Central Penn College is \$225, and uncertainty of transferability of credits is an issue.
11. The course fee for Harrisburg University is unknown.
12. The course fee for Shippensburg University is the same as the regular tuition rate; however, the University is considering a reduction of this fee in the future.
13. Clarion University's online tuition fee is \$510 per year; however, it is not known how many courses a student could take for that fee.
14. It is imperative that the District continues to encourage students to participate in the dual-enrollment and advanced-placement courses.
15. Students taking advanced-placement courses must earn a 3, 4, or 5 on the final examination in order to earn college credit.
16. Students must pass the dual-enrollment courses to earn credit for the course. The course is based entirely on the college's syllabus and grading system.
17. Students earn a 1.1-weighted grade for passing advanced-placement courses and for taking the advanced-placement test.

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II. PRESENTATIONS (Continued)

B. Online Learning – Mr. Kevin Roberts, Director of Curriculum/Instruction and Educational Technology

Mr. Roberts reviewed the online learning portion of the PowerPoint presentation, Slides 9 through 18, including an overview, rationale/philosophy, available courses, support structure, status of the program, and future goals.

The following items were noted in addition to the PowerPoint presentation:

1. By 2006, nearly 3.5 million students were participating in online learning at institutions of higher education in the United States. According to the Sloan Foundation reports, there has been an increase of around 12 to 14 percent per year on average in enrollments for fully online learning over the five years 2004-2009 in the US post-secondary system, compared with an average of approximately 2 percent increase per year in enrollments overall. Allen and Seamen (2009) claim that almost a quarter of all students in post-secondary education were taking fully online courses in 2008, and a report by Ambient Insight Research suggests that in 2009, 44 percent of post-secondary students in the USA were taking some or all of their courses online and projected that this figure would rise to 81 percent by 2014. Big Spring's online course offerings are one way that we are preparing our students for this experience (Slide 12).
2. The charter establishment expires June 30, 2010, and must be rewritten this year. Mr. Fry believes there will be more accountability built in to grow the charter experience in Pennsylvania. This is being encouraged at the federal level.
3. Bringing charter school students back to the District is not a significant savings. Currently the District pays 70 percent and receives 30 percent State subsidy for charter school students.
4. As the program through the CAIU enlarges, there is an opportunity for individual student online course costs to decrease.
5. Many states do not have cyber charter schools. Pennsylvania is ahead in this process and is making modifications to the cyber charter program instead of starting from scratch.
6. The focus at the federal level is to offer more charter options.
7. Online courses cannot be substituted for required courses at Big Spring unless extenuating circumstances arise and a student is unable to fit a regular course into the schedule. For example, if a student needs Algebra II to graduate and is unable to fit that course into the schedule at the time the course is offered, if there is room for an online course at a different time, this would be acceptable. A student who wants to "cap out" in both French and Spanish could do so via online courses if the student is unable to fit all of those courses in the regular schedule.
8. Although this has not become an issue, students could take online courses to accelerate and graduate mid term of the senior year. Guidance counselors assess whether students could handle the workload of online courses in addition to the regular course load.
9. The SAT preparation courses (Slide 12) could help students earn better SAT scores, increasing their chances of being accepted at certain colleges and universities. Although SAT scores are not the best criteria for measuring college success, that is the measuring stick many colleges use for accepting students.

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II. PRESENTATIONS (Continued)

B. Online Learning – Mr. Kevin Roberts, Director of Curriculum/Instruction and Educational Technology (Continued)

10. Recruiting cyber students into Big Spring's online courses could offer students a comparable solution to their current education and provide the students the opportunity to earn a Big Spring diploma. In addition, this would be a cost savings to the District.
11. Exposing students to online learning offers the opportunity for Big Spring's students to interact with students around the world, gaining a wealth of knowledge they might not otherwise have obtained.

President Wolf thanked Mrs. Temple and Mrs. Roberts for their presentations.

III. PREVIEW OF THE AGENDA

A. Combine and Address

President Wolf requested that the Board address XIII., NEW BUSINESS, A., PERSONNEL CONCERNS, Items A-1 through A-6, as a single action item.

B. Orrstown Bank Resolution

Mr. Fry indicated that he is pleased with Orrstown Bank's 2.1 percent interest rate offer for the \$3,500,000.00 note to finance the Newville Elementary School project.

C. Agenda Item XIII., NEW BUSINESS, G., Planned Course Adoption

In response to a question from President Wolf, Mr. Fry explained that the proposed course "Technology and Its Impact on Humans" addresses the globalization of technology and how it has affected assembly lines, programming options, etc., and how it affects culture today and how it will affect culture in the future. The course aligns with State technology standards and offers a picture of how quickly technology has infiltrated society and how quickly it will move into the future--in essence, its impact on humans.

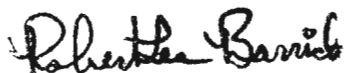
Mr. Roberts indicated that if he could change one thing about the course, it would be the title of the course. Mr. Roberts noted that the course addresses the advances in technology that have impacted the way in which we are able to receive, make, and produce goods in today's economy. The course also focuses on social networking and how that has impacted society's values. The one-half-credit elective course addresses the past, present, and future of technology.

In response to a suggestion from Vice President Swanson, Mr. Roberts indicated that he would prefer to change the title of the course to "Impact of Technology."

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Swanson, seconded by Barrick to adjourn. Roll call vote: Voting Yes: Houpt, Piper, Barrick, Swanson, and Wolf. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:52 P.M.



Robert Lee Barrick, Secretary