

**Boyertown Area School District
Curriculum Committee
August 23, 2016
Minutes**

Mrs. Usavage called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm in the Board Room of the Education Center.
Board members in attendance: Mrs. Dennin, Mrs. Usavage, Mr. Breece, Mr. Landino, Mr. Caso and Ms. Neiman

Administration in attendance: Dr. Woodard, Dr. Faidley

BASD Staff in Attendance: 2

Members of the Public: 0

Everyone recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and observed a moment of silence.

The minutes from the May 3, 2016 meeting were approved.

Mrs. Usavage shared the Board President and Committee Chair Statement

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Presentation and Discussion

Professional Learning in our District

Mrs. Usavage introduced Dr. Woodard who spoke on professional learning in our district. Mrs. Usavage really hopes to learn a lot about the strategy that we have for the investment we make in professional development and understand where it's been, where it's going and success that we have seen. Dr. Woodard introduced two additional presenters, Rabbecca Hester (Instructional Technology Coach and Technology Integration Lead Teacher) and Stephanie Petri (Assist Principal at Junior High East).

Professional learning here in the district is vast and we have a history of being able to provide a purposeful, meaningful system. Dr. Woodard hopes to address and share the depth of professional learning opportunities here in the district and help everyone realize why it's a priority. Many years ago, with a negotiation between the association and our district, we added 15 days of professional learning to the first 3 years of our new teacher's contract. These days are vital to acclimate teachers to the district and help teachers refine their instructional practices. Dr. Woodard shared that we just finished year 1 of new teacher academy and with the 20 teachers that participated it was a meaningful experience. Some of their quotations will be shared later in the presentation. Ultimately, this intensive focus on professional development is not new but as we learn more about effective professional learning we strive to incorporate them in our own system.

One statement Dr. Woodard truly believes is that our school district is an institution of learning. It's not only our students learning, it's our teachers, administrators, instructional leaders, community members, preschool directors and parents who we want to do a better job of educating about instructional practices in our district. We are truly an institution that focuses heavily on learning which is important because we need to model lifelong learning for our students. We spoke with our mentors last week, about the vital roles they play as being mentors to the new hires. The mentors need to be open and honest in their reflections of their practice and offer suggestions with the opportunity to learn side by side. It is our goal this year to make a connection to our parents, so at each elementary school we will be holding a math instruction night. This will help parents learn to support their children in the learning of math and what math instruction looks like. Last year we were able to hold a math instruction night at one of the elementary schools which came with an arousing success. We are currently working with the principals to schedule these nights. With the help of instructional coach, Melissa Schmitz, we were able to co-facilitate a presentation on math instruction to our preschool area providers and directors. People have already reached out asking for more resources for their staff and parent nights. This investment in time will grow dividends down the road.

Dr. Woodard explained that work time is the most valuable resource. We had to restructure our school calendar a little bit to identify time for our teachers to work. We have to be learning as we go and connected to our practices in the classroom. This past school year we took our 9 one hour sessions and combined them with some early dismissals to provide a longer period of time when teachers can be engaged in learning and collaborate with other teachers. It's not any more time that teachers are required to learn but it's more spread out and job embedded. It may seem like a little move but it's been a powerful move and growing in importance. Besides time, another important resource is our financial resources. Dr. Woodard shared we spend roughly 1% of our operating budget on professional learning. Although that seems like a lot, we are trying to maintain, refine and improve our practices. We want to make sure we are doing what's best for our professionals to stay current and innovative.

Dr. Woodard asked for everyone to take a look at the BASD priority areas. This ties in with the mission poster and the work we had done with the comprehensive plan. We talked a lot about gathering input from stakeholders while working in sub-committees. Dr. Woodard co-facilitated the session on the effective and continuous learning for all personnel. This was broken down into four parts:

- Transforming professional learning focused on growth for all personnel.
- Cultivate a positive culture of instructional coaching which will help implement best practices.
- Strengthen educators integrative technology skills to reach all learners, especially with the 1:1 initiative at the high school
- We also want to be the employee of choice who attracts highly qualified, diverse personnel.

Dr. Woodard shared that when looking at a professional learning system you have to look at a multitude of things. You have to look at the district's vision and goals, along with state requirements for teachers based on student learning objectives. Teachers need to know how to integrate these objectives into their practice, how to record those objectives and how to monitor progress. We also have to think about how we will deliver professional learning. This can be done using experts or we can look internally with use of teachers or coaches in the district. We

need to grow expertise within our own faculty by attending local conferences, coaching collaborative and networking with other area schools and teachers. If we work together collaboratively sharing practices that worked in other places, we'll be the recipients of that. We take feedback very seriously from our participants in professional learning sessions. We have integrated evaluations to help drive what we need to do to effectively meet our teachers' needs.

Dr. Woodard shared a bar chart of professional learning opportunities which compares the 14-15 trainings with the 15-16 trainings. It compares in house training and trainings outside the district for both professional and paraprofessional staff. When designing professional learning opportunities, we have to consider our paraprofessional staff. In order to be a highly qualified, paraprofessionals must earn 20 hours annually to maintain their highly qualified status. It is essential to provide opportunities in-house, through the IU or PATTAN. We are also trying to grow our resources virtually and offer online trainings. When comparing the 14-15 school year to the 15-16 school year, there was a 5% increase in offerings for our teachers and paraprofessionals.

When breaking down the priority areas, you look at the transforming of professional learning focused on growth for all personnel very seriously. Designing a professional learning system for a district our size is not a job that can be done by one person. There should be input provided by the people who are engaging in those professional learning opportunities so we really attempt to get that feedback from our participants. Dr. Woodard shared that several years ago we added The Professional Education Council to help guide the professional learning in our district. Although it looks different than it did years ago, we still have the Professional Education Council which is made up of representatives such as teachers, building administrators, central office administrators and coaches. Dr. Woodard believes one piece we are missing from the council is community or parent input. It's a personal goal to help add that piece to the puzzle. Dr. Woodard shared her experience in the council as a building principal and felt it was tough to have attendance and voices where missing in the room. After some brainstorming with the council and Dr. Faidley we moved a one hour per month meeting to a quarterly meeting where teachers and participants met for a half a day. The half a day provided much more thorough dialogue, more planning and productivity. In the fourth quarter, we have a June retreat after school is over for a full day where we reflect and prepare for the upcoming school year. Dr. Woodard feels the impact of the Professional Education Council is great. Some of the changes we have in place this year resulted from the planning that took place in June.

Dr. Woodard shared a slide showing Blooms 21, where high order thinking goes up the graphic/triangle. Professional learning when dealing with adults has to be flipped around because if you were to speak to the teachers in sessions like this it would not be very effective. Instead, we need to provide experiences that stimulate them, forcing them to use their high order thinking skills. Dr. Woodard engaged in a webinar this summer where this resonated with her. When designing professional learning we need to flip and start with the creation piece rather than a lecture format. This helps us learn what is most effective when working with teachers. We also need to get them participating in highly engaging activities.

Dr. Woodard shared our BHAG, a term that is used to describe a big hairy audacious goal. Two summers ago, the Professional Education Council created a BHAG, which shows what impact we want to have on our institution. Our BHAG is to revolutionize professional learning in our district, to encourage individualized, targeted, ongoing opportunities to collaboratively build

capacity which increases student achievement. It's a big thing to go after but we are inching closer to it all the time. This is really what drives all our work both in the Professional Education Council and the Office of Teaching and Learning – instructional coaches, lead teachers, etc. We want to develop the capacity within each other. We value collaboration and want our group to be true learning partners. That is how we work to meet that BHAG.

Dr. Woodard introduced the standards of professional learning. We have a team that is currently participating in the Learning Forward Academy class of 2016. Each member has developed a problem of practice that individual to themselves. Learning Forward has designed standards of professional learning which guide and enumerate the conditions, processes and content of professional learning to support continuous improvement in leadership, teaching and student learning. The standards stress that effective professional learning is embedded in a culture committed to continuous improvement and informed by data and research on student and educator performance. We must incorporate our data, always focus on results and outcomes and look at the resources we have. The standards also define requisites of professional learning so we can advocate for it as essential and as a fundamental driver for educational reform. Without addressing professional learning and what's going on in the classroom, our students' achievements aren't going to improve. If we can incorporate these standards into our practice of professional learning, we will ultimately reach that prize of increased student achievement. Educators must take an active role in their continuous improvement and place emphasis on the learning. When fully implemented, educators are active partners in determining the focus of their learning and how they're learning occurs and how they evaluate its effectiveness. Most educator's professional learning is the singular most accessible means they have to develop the new knowledge, skills, and practice necessary to better meet students' learning needs. If they are going to make a change, it needs to be done through professional learning. With that being said, Learning Forward has designed the Standard Assessment Inventory which is a tool to measure teacher perceptions of professional learning. It will also help us to guide the planning, facilitation, implementation and evaluation of the professional learning we offer here so we can maximize the impact and investment. We want to make sure the time and money spent is doing what we want it to do. BASD will be utilizing this tool for the first time in the district. Over the course of the next few weeks, all district teachers will be taking the actual survey. We can then take that information and look at where on those standards we are strong and where we need to improve. If we need to improve there are some resources and suggestions within this on how we can do that. Dr. Woodard is looking forward to receiving this data and feedback and sharing it with the committee. The Standard Assessment Inventory helps to ensure professional learning increases teaching effectiveness and gets results for educators and students. It's a web embedded survey which compares our alignment to the standards of professional learning. It helps us determine our alignment, collecting data on the quality of professional learning we offer and getting teachers' perceptions, understanding the challenges we face and how we can improve.

Mr. Breece wonders what other school districts in Montgomery and Berks County use this. Dr. Woodard does not know, because of our affiliation with Learning Forward, we were introduced to this. Mr. Breece asked if there was a database that has access to this information. Dr. Woodard will try to get this information through the IU. Dr. Faidley shared there is a Learning Forward Pennsylvania organization Dr. Woodard can contact for this information which will provide a list of Learning Forward districts.

Mrs. Usavage shared that with a history of reducing the cost and trying to increase the effectiveness of professional development, there was a move to teach ourselves with internal resources rather than sending people out and setting expectations for the people who go out to share what they have learned. Is there any data to show if we have decreased the amount of money or time used? Dr. Woodard shared the amount of money has stayed similar over the long term. However we have prioritized it differently as well. When looking at conferences, we prioritize based on what is offered locally. We do our best to build our own capacity, grow that in a small group and then train our teachers from that. We use the train the trainers model which we have followed for a long time in the district. We have also brought in presenters as well. Teachers have asked why we do not have the Literacy Fest any more. Dr. Woodard shared it was a lot of money to only reach the 40-50 teachers who would attend. Instead we try to ensure the teachers get the learning during the time they must be here rather than voluntarily. Tech Fest last year was moved to a teacher in-service day due to sliding attendance in previous years. It's a lot of investment for little return, so if we make technology integration a subject for an in-service day we are sending a message that we value this learning. Dr. Woodard shared we are trying to figure out the best way to capitalize on experts that have a very large impact on our district. After talking with Mr. Szablowski, it's a fairly level budgetary expense.

Mrs. Dennin asked what the teachers do prior to adding 15 days of professional learning to their teacher contract. Dr. Woodard explained that 5 days would be added prior to year 1, 5 days prior to year 2 and 5 days prior to year 3. This is in addition to their 12 hours of administratively directed hours, 9 one hour sessions and 6 hours of classroom prep. Once the teacher reaches year 4, they would be back to their normal 27 hours per year. Mrs. Dennin asked if once a teacher becomes more experienced they don't have to do the extra 5 days. Dr. Woodard responded that is correct.

Mr. Landino would like to know how you integrate the opportunity areas we have as a district as far as student learning and student results versus the professional learning. Part of this is integrating technology and teaching techniques. Looking at the opportunity areas, how do we improve our results and choose topics when we do professional learning. Dr. Woodard explained we look at the data. An example would be the change to the PSSA state testing to be more PA Core/Common Core aligned introduced a section for grades 4-8 called the text dependent analysis questions. Dr. Woodard explained these are writing samples that are directly correlated to text and passages that students read. It's not just a summary of what they read. Students must analyze, authenticate a written response and defend it with evidence based in the text. After the first year of the state test, we discovered we needed a lot of work in text dependent analysis. Therefore, all of the 15-16 school year we devised professional learning sessions focused on grades 4-8 and included grade 3 building blocks to open ended responses that ended up being a K through 8 initiative. The level of rigor that is expected on a text dependent analysis question supercedes the multiple choice pieces. We can give students opportunities to practice throughout the year and provide teachers with meaningful feedback so they can provide their students with information on how to get better. The data also showed the open ended responses in math still need improvement so we will be incorporating that. Dr. Woodard shared we do look at testing to drive our professional learning based on data. We also look at teacher feedback and innovative practices out there.

Mr. Breece wanted clarification on the required teacher hours. Dr. Woodard explained the 12 hours of administratively directed could be conferences or curricular revisions but the teachers

will have a choice in some of the different professional learning opportunities to earn these 12 hours. The 6 classroom preparation hours could occur at any point of the school year. 5 of the 9 one hour sessions are held on early dismissal days where the teachers must stay an additional hour after school to engage in professional learning. The other 4 additional hours are spread across the school year. Dr. Woodard explained the teachers are required to complete 27 hours of professional learning beyond their normal school day. For the new teachers, it's an additional 30 hours of professional learning to make it 57 hours for the year. Mr. Breece asked if there is a cost per session. Dr. Woodard explained we like to limit the sessions to 25 people. The more sessions offered, the coaches have to run we must pay supplemental pay to the coaches. Dr. Woodard explained last year we had 1200 offerings but those sessions could be 1, 3 or 6 hours each. On a Tech Fest day, we could have 40 offerings because there are breakout sessions in addition to keynote sessions. These sessions are part of that 1200. Mr. Breece asked how much of those 1200 sessions do we actually facilitate. Dr. Woodard shared the principals, leadership team, lead teachers, instructional coaches, teachers, etc. all help facilitate. Mr. Breece wondered if there is a record of what teachers exceeded the mandatory hours. Dr. Woodard shared we are continually working with the data in My Learning Plan and could get this data to everyone.

Dr. Woodard shared instructional coaching is responsible for bringing evidence based practices into classrooms by working with teachers and other school leaders. Our coaches meet monthly with their building level principals to communicate so we're all on the same page. The coaches are aware of the building action plans which are created by the building data teams, to help support the teachers and staff in meeting that action plan. It's an established professional practice. It can happen one on one, in a small group or cohort. The teachers create their own personal goals and the instructional coaches help meet those goals. Dr. Woodard shared the district has 2 instructional technology coaches: Rebecca Hester and Michelle Hanna. Also, 2.5 instructional coaches for the elementary schools: Dana Kramaroff, Melissa Schmitz and Jen Joyce who serves as half time instructional coach and half time elementary lead teacher. Christine Hartzman is the instructional coach for both junior high schools and Jami Renfro is the instructional coach at the high school. Dr. Woodard shared these coaches engage in a lot of professional learning themselves through the BCIU, mentorship programs, and virtual education chats. It's important that we stay well versed in our practices. Dr. Woodard shared a pie chart, which symbolized the cohorts or small groups the coaches maintain. 29% of the coach's work was with the new teachers.

Ms. Neiman asked when was the support done, was it done during the school day, outside of the classroom or was it done after school. Coaches meet with new teachers before or after school or during their planning time. They do not pull new teachers out of the classroom. They may go into the classroom and offer some suggestions and feedback on what they see. They could also arrange time with the new teacher during the students' special. The bulk of it is when the students are not in the classroom. In previous years, the coaches worked with the new teachers the first 6 weeks of the school year. After feedback from coaches and teachers, it was too much too soon, so this year the intensive support with the coaches will not begin until mid-October. The mentors will work with the new teachers closely to get the class up and running and the coaches will add support when necessary.

Mr. Landino asked if the new teacher orientation and training is for all new teachers hired in Boyertown even if they come in with prior experience from another district. Dr. Woodard explained that all new teachers are required to do the new teaching academies.

Dr. Woodard shared some of the cohorts this year will be different than last year. A lot of it is based on data and where we choose to make those connections. Some content of the coaches work includes: gathering resources, working with support staff, coach's professional development, administratively-directed meetings, debriefing conversations, classroom visits, co-taught lessons, demonstration lessons, data, planning and refining practice conversations along with teacher and coach reach out. Melissa Schmitz, who is an elementary instructional coach is a huge advocate of Beers and Probst two authors, who have created sign posts which are different ways authors craft messages and mile markers signifying the reader to pay attention. A few years ago, they created the fictional sign posts, more recently they wrote a book on the non-fiction sign posts. Our teachers are hooked because it is helping kids pay attention to the charts and graphs and quotations in text. Melissa has been a huge advocate of the work and talked with a 6th grade teacher who was willing to try these practices in the classroom. The teacher watched Melissa modeled some of these practices with the students and soon they were co-planning ways to co-teach lessons. The students started to talk and reflect about the learning. Dr. Woodard shared a video of the students' work and how their understanding has improved as a result of the coach teacher collaboration. Dr. Woodard also shared some feedback from teachers on the summer sessions run by BASD coaches and new teachers who attended the new teacher academy.

Dr. Woodard introduced Rabbecca Hester who discussed professional learning she is involved in. Rabbecca highlighted two teacher cohorts she facilitates, the first being the 1:1 laptop cohort which provides professional learning for teachers to help effectively use technology in the classroom. There is a spring and fall cohort. In the 14-15 school year, the 10th grade teachers participated. In the 15-16 school year, the 11th grade teachers participated and this 16-17 school year our 9th grade teachers will participate. The cohorts consist of 5 monthly meetings where the teachers are pulled out of the classroom for a half day of whole group training. In between those trainings, Rabbecca explained she will meet with them individually to see where they are at with technology integration. The whole group meetings consist of opportunities for teachers to learn of different technology tools and different ways to meet student learning using those tools. The teachers have the chance to create and share learning experiences with their students. The whole group meetings are structured around the 4C's: creativity, collaboration, critical thinking and communication. These are the things we want to see students doing in the classroom. Rabbecca shared when she meets with the teachers individually they discuss a student learning goal and how technology can support that goal with the help of the teacher. After the lesson they look at the evidence. Does the student learning show that the student has met their goal and has the teacher met their goal. Rabbecca shared they then discuss what is the teacher committed to continually learn in regards to technology integration.

Rabbecca shared an idea that she would like to implement called the Innovation Incubator Cohort which will consist of teachers who will participate in their own personalized learning which was inspired by Google's 20% time. Google's corporate office gives there employee's 20% of their time to work on anything they are passionate about. The development of Gmail, G-News, Google Glasses, Google Culture and Arts site all came out of that 20% time. Teachers in this cohort will go through the design thinking process to identify an educational problem and come up with a plan or prototype to test it. The teachers will have the support of building principals and instructional coaches. Rebecca's underlying goal for this cohort is to see teachers implement an innovative instructional idea that allows for student voice and choice in their learning.

Mr. Breece asked if we are measuring students on grade performance. Rabecca shared they look at the student learning examples and if they met the student goal. If not, they reflect, refine and try to improve. They look at the artifact of learning rather than a test. Mr. Breece asked if we are compartmentalizing to measure performance of students. Rabecca explained it depends on the teacher and their experiences. Some teachers want to start small and branch out and other want to start small, stay small and focus on one thing as a time. Mr. Breece asked on page 13, if we are using this per student. Rabecca explained this is an overarching learning target for the lesson that we are looking for students to meet at the end of the lesson. Mr. Breece asked if this is a survey. Rabecca explained this is a form that helps guide the conversation with teachers so the conversation doesn't get off track. This is useful for taking notes and shared only between Rabecca and the teacher. It's used to go back and reflect on the conversation once the lesson is implemented. Mr. Breece asked if they are used for teacher evaluations. Rabecca shared they are not used for evaluation, it's used to guide our conversations and record what we learned and reflect. Dr. Woodard explained the work that a coach does is not evaluative. We really make sure teachers understand coaches are there for support and not to make judgments. The work done between a coach and a teacher is highly confidential unless the teacher would like to share openly with the principal. Dr. Woodard shared the work a coach does with a teacher's learning goal is impacting student achievement. That's why we have a student focus and teacher focus, because the work a teacher does ultimately should impact student achievement.

Mrs. Usavage thanked Rabecca for sharing these two cohorts with the group. Mrs. Usavage likes the idea of the innovation incubator that big companies are using and it takes a lot of support to help that happen. Mrs. Usavage asked which book Rabecca read. Rabecca shared it's called *The Innovator's Mindset* by George Couros, who is a school principal in Canada. He is all about innovative thinking, innovative instructional practices and innovative professional learning. He provides some great applicable strategies from his book and how to implement them in the classroom.

Mrs. Petri shared when they started the academy they were asked to develop a problem of practice. Mrs. Petri shared her initial problem of practice was driven around data, looking at student data and analyzing how we ensure all students get one year's worth of academic growth. Through experiences with Learning Forward, reflection done through group work and discussions with teachers at JHE we recognized that students are all at different levels so we need to make sure we meet the learning needs of the teachers to ensure growth for each student. Mrs. Petri shared her problem of practice changed from just looking at student data to developing and maintaining a school community built on the mindset of lifelong learning, developing common language with instructional practices among staff to meet the needs of all students and providing diverse learning opportunities among the staff which will result in a year's worth of growth for all students. Mrs. Petri shared what it would look like at JHE to apply some of the professional learning standards. We have regularly scheduled collaboration team meetings when teachers of a like subject get together during their school planning time to look at student data, common assessments, quizzes, and tests. The teachers then share ideas and decide what needs to be done to meet the students' needs in the classroom and build on each other's experience and knowledge. Also, team meetings are held in the 7th and 8th grade classrooms where cross-curricular teachers can get together and discuss the needs of students. The focus is how to ensure all students are growing and learning together, what interventions and support we can provide to that student if they are struggling or need additional support. Mrs. Petri shared they also hold

quarterly meetings between the building administrators and teachers' to discuss the teachers building action plans, building goals, what and how they are doing, and what additional help do they need to meet their goals. During those meeting's we may recognize the need for more technology integration or literacy supports where we could reach out to coaches and utilize them as a support person. Mrs. Petri has seen a huge increase in the use of coaches this year. The teachers are really embracing this model and inviting coaches in to help with lessons and refinement. The data we look at is continuous such as student achievement data, walk-through data, attendance, discipline and how to intervene with a student who is struggling in different areas, accessing the student assistance program to make sure there aren't any roadblocks getting in the way of their successes. Implementation ties into the regular classroom walk-troughs and observations. Mrs. Petri explained they do try to assist the teachers with coaching but it's a grey area because they are supervisors. The goal is to provide specific feedback to help the teachers grow and celebrate things in the class that were done well. The outcomes look at students meeting and exceeding learning targets in classrooms, looking at summative assessments and individual goals with the mindset of every student having a year's worth of growth. Mrs. Petri shared a visual of what she just discussed. The learning, analyzing, conversations and collaboration are continuous. One thing learned through the Learning Forward sessions is called the implementation dip, where you have a new learning which is doing really well and then hits a plateau or dip. We recognize that it happens and doesn't mean that this practice goes out the window. We may need to refresh some learning or professional development to help continue the growth focused around our students work.

Mrs. Petri shared some examples of things that have come out of the work including a flipped math classroom. The teachers create a short video clip lesson embedded in technology where students watch this for homework and post back to the teacher what they understand about the lesson, what they have questions about and what they need help with. The teachers gain the feedback after the lessons are completed and the next day they design their lessons based on what the student needs are. The teachers have been able to keep track of where there students are academically on a daily basis and are able to intervene early when there are misconceptions.

Mr. Breece asked if the misunderstanding is by the student or by the teacher. Mrs. Petri explained the misunderstanding is by the student. If a student is working on a problem and they are doing a step wrong which they continue to practice at home, that's what they know. During the lesson, the student can practice in front of the teacher, where the teacher can intervene and figure out how to help them understand the process.

Mr. Breece asked if these are individual sessions with the students. Mrs. Petri shared this is within the classroom time. The teacher will group the students based on what the student needs are and move around the room and help them problem solve to understand the concepts. Mrs. Petri has been very impressed with the mathematical dialogue in the classroom with those students.

Mrs. Petri shared another thing they are working on in their 7th grade ELA classes is a workshop approach. Mrs. Petri explained they have implemented a double period of ELA to increase the time for some reading in class, small group conferencing and working with the teachers to identify where their reading strengths and needs are. They are able to diversify their lessons to meet the needs of students with an expanded amount of time. The ELA teachers have really embraced the coaches to help them with this model and how to best meet the needs of their

students. Dr. Woodard shared our summative test results show this is working and we have had an increase in this particular area.

Mrs. Petri explained the flex period is the last period of the day and the goal of this time is to meet the needs of the student, whether it be remediation or enrichment. In the team meetings, teachers can identify students who may need additional help. The teachers are all provided time during flex where they can do some small group tutoring and enrichment activities with the students. Mrs. Petri explained with the use of Google Forms we have been able to keep track of what interventions we are providing and which students are utilizing this time.

Mrs. Petri shared another focus is attendance tracking because if a student is not in school then they will not experience that year's worth of growth. We have been targeting families earlier and more often working closely with the attendance secretary. We are identifying trends of absenteeism and reaching out to the families and looking for ways to support them. We have increased our efforts and have seen a decrease in the number of citations and truant students we had this past year. Mrs. Petri feels we have strong support system to drive an environment of professional learning.

Thinking about what's driving what we are doing professionally, Dr. Woodard shared her personal problem of practice, to design teacher and principal learning that is grounded in day to day practice, personalized and designed to enhance educators' instructional practices with the intent of improving student learning. This really does drive what we are trying to accomplish here in our district. The time invested into building instructional leaders within our instructional team, focusing on increasing rigor in our instruction, we are developing within our principals, assistant principals and members of our leadership team the knowledge and understanding of what rigorous instruction looks like through questioning. Questioning can truly ramp the rigor for students. Many of us have been out of the classroom for a while. Much of this is very different than what we taught on a daily basis. The expectations of our students have increased, so we need to make sure that we are honing our practices and staying current. Therefore, the professional learning for our leadership team is essential. Dr. Woodard explained we are not coaches because we have to evaluate but at the same time we have to supervise. There is a huge difference between the two. Supervision is providing the support and meaningful feedback to help change practices and evaluation is when you have to put a letter grade on it or proficiency level to it. Instructional leaders need to do both in their day so we are continuing to grow that within our instructional leaders.

Looking at the teachers and the professional learning plans for the upcoming school year, all the 6th, 7th and 8th grade teachers will be spending their time really looking at transitioning from a junior high setting to a middle school setting. Our 6th grade teachers will be spending their professional learning time at the middle school in preparation for making that change. They will learn about one another, cross curricular integration, how to serve as an advisor, and flex period. They will do further curriculum development to fill meaningful activities during science and social studies with the introduction of a literacy in the content area, small group instruction and focusing on questioning and rigor. The high school focus is very similar, learning more and growing within the academies. They will be doing some special education training for our regular education teachers. They will learn about LINK crew which is a transitional program for our 9th graders coming into the high school in year 17-18. It's a research, evidence-based program. We will work with the staff on questioning and rigor.

At the elementary level during the early dismissal days and one hour sessions, teachers will spend half the time doing grade level collaboration, focusing on student work across all grade levels, looking at lesson design and resources and continue to work with differentiation. The second half of the afternoon will be a choice session with personalized and individualized learning. Some of the choice is still district owned. We want to make sure it's aligned to our priority areas such as text dependent analysis, innovative practices, engagement strategies, technology integration and writing. These are all pieces teachers have said they want to learn more about so they will be facilitated by lead teachers, coaches, principals, teachers and learning from within.

Mr. Breece would like to know how The Learning Forward program helps our district grow vocational course participation at BCTC. Mrs. Petri responded they are encouraging students to figure out what their strengths, interests and passions are, not just scores on a test. Their help to guide students through counseling service when they do course selection and communicate what the possibilities are at the career center.

Mr. Breece would like to know if the BASD has increased there BCTC enrollment. Mr. Landino responded that it has gone up, looking at the charge back based on the 3 year level of rolling attendance. Mr. Breece was curious how many of the 7000 students attend BCTC. Dr. Faidley added that the BASD has the largest number of students attending BCTC in Berks County. Mr. Breece would like to know the total number of students who attend BCTC in Berks County. Dr. Faidley responded he can get him a chart with the enrollment numbers. Mr. Breece would like to see ways we can encourage BASD students to attend vocational school. As a society, we have overstated the value of college to children. Mr. Landino agreed and responded those students who come out of BCTC have industry certificates and jobs out of high school. Mrs. Petri explained at the junior high level the 9th graders do a tour and they highly recommend the opportunity if it's something they want to pursue. The turnout and interest has been very powerful and the counselors do an excellent job starting this conversation in 8th grade and helping those students with course selections.

Mrs. Usavage shared she has served on the counseling committee and during that time they recognized that the perception of the Career and Technology Center was not what it should be. The counselors took it very seriously and made a lot of changes, making it very visual to the kids and advertising to the parents.

Mrs. Dennin agreed the changes have been very positive. Years ago they used to funnel kids and not give everyone the opportunity. Mrs. Dennin is happy to hear there are many more students having the opportunity to go.

Mr. Landino shared depending on the major some of these BCTC students will be going off to college. Some specific programs have the expectations that additional education will be needed.

Dr. Woodard shared this summer she attended a session at the Greater Reading Chamber of Commerce with other schools districts and large industry around the Reading area. The word out there is we are making it an option to establish a trade that is employable and highly skilled. Dr. Woodard spoke with the BCTC person and explained our transition to a middle school setting next year. It was suggested that our 6th grade teachers come over to the BCTC to see those departments in action. Dr. Woodard stated we are actively pursuing this for the school year.

Mr. Breece feels like home life has a lot of influence over the decisions these students make in going to college or vocational school. Mrs. Usavage asked if Mr. Breece wanted some additional trend and participation on BCTC data. Mr. Breece responded he would like to see where we are within the county. Mr. Landino offered to share that data with him. Dr. Faidley stated if Mr. Landino could not find the data he will get it to everyone.

Mr. Landino thanked everyone for coming in and providing an educational presentation. Offering professional development training doesn't guarantee we are going to be a high performing organization. However, when looking at the high performing organizations in any industry there is a commitment to continuous learning of their employees and he doesn't think you can get there without it. Mr. Landino thanked everyone for what they do.

Mr. Caso would like to know what the overall goal is for the district. Mr. Caso would like to see the district improve its standing within its peers to get to the top 10 of schools in Pennsylvania. Mr. Caso asked how we are measuring ourselves against that, is that one of our goals and what are the key performance indicators by which we are making that assessment.

Dr. Woodard shared our goal as a district is to increase student achievement. The metrics are changing. Looking at a US News and World report of the best high schools in America they look at SAT scores, acceptance rate into college and how many students attend a 4 year baccalaureate degree. Dr. Faidley shared they also look at if your school offers international baccalaureate as a course offering and how many students are participating in AP courses. Dr. Faidley explained the metrics may not be applicable to all schools. Dr. Woodard explained with the large number of students going to vocational/technical schools, if we have more kids going there and less students going to a 4 year post-secondary school makes us look less competitive in some cases. Dr. Woodard shared the state looks at the district's school performance profile or SPP. Two years ago, it was for each school in the state, then they took it away except for the high schools. Recently, we learned that it is coming back and will be a rating of every public school in our state. BASD is anxiously awaiting that school performance profile score. Much of the indicator of that score is based upon standardized test scores at the elementary level. The secondary level incorporates multiple criteria such as how many students scored a 3 and above in an AP course, how many students took an AP exam and graduation rate. It's more than just the Keystone pass and achievement score. When we get the SPP scores, we will be able to see where we rank when looking at other schools. Dr. Woodard would like to see the SPP scores for high performing schools in our state and see how much money is spent on professional learning and how we rank with all of that data.

Dr. Faidley explained when you look at metrics and statistical analysis it's important to compare apples to apples and not apples to oranges. With the use of the Forecast 5 platform, which allows us to look at data in many ways and utilize data from other school systems, BASD will want to choose schools similar in makeup and demographic to have a true measure used to track success.

Mr. Breece added the way the community reads success is what we need to look at. When you start to compare budgets with other schools, some have large corporations and business to spread out their tax burden where BASD only has their community. Mr. Breece agreed we have to be careful how we do comparisons. The rankings are something the community looks at and we

need to be concerned with. Rankings drive property values along with our taxes. It's important to educate the community on what those district rankings are.

Mrs. Usavage thanked everyone for the presentation, it was very informative.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Board Member Comments

Dr. Faidley has seen our capacity in professional learning grow exponentially because of focus work, dialogue, people coming to the table learning and training to do what's right for the kids in the school district. It's also a utilization of our resources we are allocating differently and not coming to the board for additional resources. It's an ultimate testament to the culture that exists in this school district by reallocating in a different way to create greater efficacy across our system. Dr. Faidley shared it's pleasing to him to watch the professional learning become more innovative and thoughtful and looking at problems of practice differently. Dr. Faidley is proud of our professional learning. Our student achievement will continue to improve based on the work that is going on in our school district. The metrics can be discussed as a board and community together to be the best we can be.

Mr. Landino would like to hear what those opportunity areas are in student population and outcomes and how we are tying that into professional development, measuring results and seeing if we are making progress in those areas.

Mrs. Dennin thinks a really good example of how professional learning increases achievement was the example on text dependent analysis. We learn as we have those standardized tests, we need to have something to measure our districts by. Mrs. Dennin shared professional learning is important but we need to use all of our resources. The metric that needs to be used is the growth on a particular test. Mrs. Dennin feels the rankings are important, but would rather concentrate on the improved test scores and growth, with that the increase in rankings will come. If we are going to concentrate on rankings, we need to be aware of what those measurements are for those rankings. Mrs. Dennin would like to see this as a topic for upcoming curriculum meetings.

Mrs. Usavage shared the data summary is one topic we discuss in this committee. We can add the different rankings and educate ourselves on how they are different so we can decide what we want to measure ourselves by. Dr. Woodard shared we would like to discuss the data summary topic in the fall. Mr. Usavage shared we would also like to hear about changes to instruction and curriculum along with the cost and benefit of those changes, the 17-18 middle school transition plans, and when discussing professional development we want to tie it to results. Mrs. Usavage asked for thoughts on other topics the committee would like to hear about.

Mr. Breece would like some information on the school districts in Berks and Montgomery County that are doing professional learning. Dr. Faidley shared every school district in Pennsylvania does professional development. Some schools have less or make it more of a priority. Mr. Breece would like to know how our model compares to the other schools. Mr. Breece feels SAT scores are important as the state continually changes the goal post on other assessments which make it difficult to measure. Mr. Breece wondered if anyone has heard anything on the new community schools, going to a virtual school system, which is being

proposed by the political candidates. Mrs. Dennin shared she does not think it will apply to our district.

Mrs. Usavage stated how we compare to other school districts would be a topic for a future presentation.

Dr. Faidley suggested an agenda item looking at the poverty rates in Berks County and what school districts are doing to assist the students in poverty to be prepared for the challenges they're facing and the rigor that is expected of them in education.

Mrs. Dennin shared she would like to start gathering data on how many of districts are providing full day kindergarten, should our district pilot, do those districts that have full day kindergarten have a bigger percentage of students on free and reduced lunch, what are the benefits, and drawbacks and would this work in our community.

Mrs. Dennin would like to discuss the opportunity to offer learn to swim classes to our students since the YMCA allows the district to utilize the pool for free.

Mr. Breece would like to see a demonstration on common core math done by the teachers rather than administrative staff.

Announcements

August 30, 2016 – Facilities Committee Meeting, Ed Center, Board Room, 6:00 PM

September 13, 2016 – School Board Directors Meeting, Washington Elementary, 7:00 PM

September 20, 2016 – Policy Review Committee Meeting, Ed Center, Board Room, 6:00 PM

September 27, 2016 – Facilities Committee Meeting, Ed Center, Board Room, 7:00 PM

Mrs. Usavage adjourned the meeting at 8:41 PM.