

**Boyertown Area School District  
Curriculum Committee  
September 23, 2014  
Minutes**

Dr. Christman called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm in the library of Earl Elementary.

**Board members in attendance:** Dr. Christman, Mrs. Dennin, Mr. Elsier, Mrs. Hartford, Mr. Landino, Ms. Neiman, Mrs. Usavage, and Mr. Stengle

**Administration in attendance:** Dr. Miller, Dr. Woodard, Mr. Scoboria, and Dr. Faidley

**BASD Staff in Attendance:** 0

**Members of the Public:** 2

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

The minutes from the May 27, 2014, meeting were accepted.

**Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

**Presentation and Discussion**

Dr. Woodard began the presentation portion by sharing an update related to the BASD Cyber Program.

Dr. Woodard shared the following highlights:

BASD cyber enrollment is currently 28 full-time students. Of those 28 students, 16 are high school students, 8 are junior high students and 4 are elementary students. Of the 16 high school students, 1 student transferred from another outside cyber school and two students relocated into the district. These two students decided to enroll with our cyber program rather than staying with their current cyber school. Of the 8 junior high students, 3 students transferred from outside cyber schools into our own BASD cyber and 1 student relocated from an outside district into BASD cyber. Of the 4 elementary students, 1 student transferred into BASD cyber from a private school outside of district.

Mrs. Usavage asked where the new students came from. Dr. Woodard shared that they would have come from within our brick and mortar program.

Dr. Woodard shared that for last year's 13-14 enrollment we had 13 students at high school level. 5 graduated in June so 8 remained. All 8 of those students came to brick and mortar this year. This is due to the relationships we are building with the families and we feel this to be a success. Of the 7 students in junior high, 6 returned back to brick and mortar and 1 is currently in BASD cyber. This student also attends some course work at Junior High West for math and science. Of the 7 students in elementary, 3 were in grade 6 and transitioned into brick and mortar at Junior High East or West. The other 3 were new kindergarten students who transitioned into

brick and mortar. This worked better for the parents due to day care issues and the ½ day program didn't match their schedule.

Dr. Woodard added at the end of last year there were 27 students in BASD cyber. At one point in the school year our enrollment was 33 students.

Finally Dr. Woodard shared that outside cyber enrollment has reduced from 187 to 127 over the course of the past three years. This is a significant savings to our district.

Ms. Neiman would like to know many of the outside cyber students have graduated from outside cyber. Dr. Woodard stated she would look into that information for her.

Mr. Stengle asked if we believe that brick and mortar is a better program than our cyber program. Dr. Woodard stated we promote the idea of online education, but we also love to establish good relationships with the families to get them back into the brick and mortar setting. She also shared that our cyber coordinator, Rabecca Hester, communicates with all the cyber families very frequently.

Mr. Stengle asked how many out of district students we are currently serving. Dr. Woodard shared that currently there are none. Mr. Stengle asked if there is a reason why we haven't been offering our program to other districts. Profitability could be established if we would market outside the district. Dr. Woodard shared that the goal has been cost savings by reclaiming outside cyber students. We wanted to contain our cyber program to our own residences and grow and build the program before we make it public.

Dr. Christman shared the whole idea was to take from the outside cyber and bring to our inside cyber so that at least we are spending money on our children through our education here and then they can get a Boyertown diploma as well.

Mr. Stengle asked if there is a desire to market outside the school district. He would like to know Dr. Faidley's opinion.

Dr. Faidley shared that our first goal has been to establish a strong program. He went on to explain that we need to develop a comprehensive online curriculum. Once this has been established, then we can decide if we want to market the program.

Mr. Stengle asked if we have moved ahead with discussions with other districts to determine if there is interest. Dr. Faidley shared that he has had informal discussions with other Berks County superintendents. His goal would be to tap into other school districts' resources and combine them to offer a full complement of courses as it's very expensive. This will be a big impact to the district's budget.

Mr. Stengle reminded everyone of the overall district enrollment and the idea that cyber programming could help. He went on to explain that he is interested in expanding the cyber program and that he doesn't understand why we wouldn't do it.

Mrs. Dennin asked for clarification about how we are supplementing our program including whether or not we need to assign teachers to a cyber course. Dr. Woodard shared that when we

utilize a BASD created cyber course it either takes a line on a teacher's schedule or we would need to pay a stipend.

Ms. Neiman asked if we have looked at the possibility of working with neighboring schools to share cyber responsibilities. Dr. Faidley shared that he has been having conversations with other superintendents but nothing has been established yet.

Mr. Landino asked if we have learned anything from students that have left our BASD cyber programs to improve the program. Also, are we marketing the program against other outside cyber programs? Dr. Woodard shared that we do conduct exit interviews with our families and are finding that in many cases the events occurring outside of school are changing and allowing them to return to the brick and mortar program. Dr. Woodard also stated that we do offer our secondary students laptops to complete their online work. However, we can look into other ways to market against other cyber schools.

Dr. Faidley shared the value of the Boyertown diploma and the dismal performance of outside cyber charter programs. We have done a great job sharing with our community the differences between how online school districts are performing and how our school district is performing. The power of our diploma will get them further.

Mr. Stengle asked what is the cost to educate a student within the district. Dr. Faidley stated roughly \$12,000 per student.

Mr. Landino stated that the cost of paying for an outside cyber charter is much higher than what it costs to educate our kids through our own cyber charter.

Mr. Stengle asked if cyber students get to participate in extracurricular activities like band or football. Mr. Scoboria stated BASD cyber students can do anything offered within the district. Outside cyber students can participate in extracurricular activities with a fee.

Mr. Stengle asked about the cost savings using BASD cyber compared to outside cyber. Dr. Woodard stated the financial impact of cyber would be discussed at the next finance committee meeting.

Mrs. Usavage asked how cyber students are reported for school performance. Dr. Woodard stated cyber students are reported within the school of their residence.

Mr. Elsier shared that he remembers the break-even cost for BASD cyber was roughly 10 students which based on our numbers means we would be showing a profit. He applauds the administration for the work that has been done in this area.

### Common Core State Standards

Dr. Woodard began the presentation on the introduction of the ELA Literacy Common Core. There are three shifts that are required within the ELA common core: regular practice with complex texts and its academic language; reading, writing and speaking grounded in evidence from texts; and building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction.

Dr. Woodard shared a video showing how the common core is better preparing the students for college.

Dr. Woodard provided examples of pre and post common core questions. She stated that ELA is now English, Reading, and Writing together. She also provided a 6<sup>th</sup> grade sample test for the committee to review and look at how the questions are crafted.

Finally, Dr. Woodard provided a PDE timeline of PA Academic Content which will be made public. PDE is looking for feedback from parents on the Core curriculum.

#### **Committee Comment**

No comments

#### **Public Comment**

Mrs. Dierolf asked how long it takes for cyber writing courses to be developed. Dr. Woodard responded that it takes a year to year and a half. We currently have 10 developed courses.

#### **Announcements**

October 28, 2014 - Curriculum Committee Meeting - Washington Elementary Library 6:00 PM

November 11, 2014 - Curriculum Committee Meeting - Ed Center Board Room 6:00 PM

Dr. Christman adjourned the meeting at 6:54 pm.

Motion to adjourn: Ms. Neiman