DRAFT

BOYERTOWN AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Boyertown, Pennsylvania
www.boyertownasd.org

Parent/Community/Intergovernmental Committee Meeting
Tuesday, March 22, 2016
Meeting Minutes

Mr. Breece, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Education Center Board Room.

Board members in attendance: Mr. Breece, Mrs. Dennin, Mr. Elsier, Mr. Landino, Mr. Lewis, Ms. Neiman, Mrs. Usavage, Mr. Stengle

Administration in attendance: Dr. Faidley, Dr. Miller, Dr. Woodard

Members of the Public: 8

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

Public Comment Period #1
There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes
Motion to approve the minutes from the committee meetings of 10/20/15 and 10/21/15 was made by Mr. Elsier and second motion by Mrs. Dennin. The minutes were adopted unanimously.

Presentations
Foundation for Boyertown Education
Mr. Breece introduced Mr. Herb and Mrs. Bobenchik to discuss the differences between what the Foundation for Boyertown Education is doing and what the PTOs/HSAs are doing. We want to make sure the difference is clear. We also want to discuss some of the things the Foundation has coming up and the benefits they can bring to the school district.

Mr. Herb is appreciative of the support the school board members have provided the foundation. The school board provided the seed money for the foundation to get started. As a 501c3, the foundation is a non-profit. The foundation is also an EITC (Educational Improvement Tax Credit) approved organization. This allows companies to divert a portion of their state tax liability by contributing to an EITC approved organization.

These are funds that would not otherwise be available for district programs. Last year's heroin and prescription drug program was funded through a grant that the foundation obtained. Approximately $19,000 of robotics equipment was purchased for Jr. High West by the foundation to support STEM. A computerized table saw was donated to the tech ed department at BASH through the foundation.

Mr. Herb explained that part of Mrs. Bobenchik's purpose for going around to the PTOs/HSAs was to get people excited about the Harlem Wizards fundraiser on April 1. We need to get the word out and let people know why the foundation is here and what the purpose is. We have many more requests than we have money, so the foundation needs to have fundraisers.

Mr. Stengle stated that the board initially did a loan for $25,000 and he asked about the resolution of the loan.

Is it still outstanding or has it been forgiven? Mr. Herb stated that it can't be forgiven because the loan was from taxpayer's funds. At a prior meeting, the foundation asked for and was granted an extension of 1 year for repayment because of funding situations that they thought were critical.

Mr. Stengle asked for the net figure (amount raised – expenses) for a given period. Mr. Herb will send the information requested to Dr. Faidley for distribution to the school board. Mr. Herb explained that the foundation has restricted and unrestricted funds and they are separated on the balance sheet. Restricted funds are EITC funds because they must be used for specific purposes. Unrestricted funds can be spent on anything the board approves as well as administrative expenses.

Mr. Stengle made a suggestion that the foundation should solicit the school board members to give donations. He thinks that a level of expectation for giving should be set for school board members. In response to Mr. Stengle's request, Mrs. Dennin stated that all school board members are encouraged to give as individuals. She feels an obligation as a member of the school board to support the foundation personally but she isn't sure a giving expectation is appropriate. Mr. Stengle stated that he would like to see the school board demonstrate an economic commitment to the foundation. Dr. Faidley will include information in Friday's newsletter on how to give and where to give and he is willing to track the amount and communicate it through social media. Mr. Herb stated they are also considering payroll deductions as a way for teachers to donate to the foundation.

Mrs. Usavage asked for a brief overview of the foundation's decision making process in determining what to support. Mr. Herb stated the foundation's charter is specific about what it will and will not support. The focus tends to be on STEM and the arts. They want to make purchases that have the most impact and broadest support. They do not provide scholarships because all money raised must stay in the district.

Mrs. Usavage suggested that to maximize contributions to the foundation they should put information on how to contribute on all of their updates. Mrs. Bobenchik agreed and also stated she is working with the district IT department to get a link on the website for online donations. Board and community members should also be encouraged to see if their employer has a matching gift program. Mrs. Usavage also suggested using donation programs, such as AmazonSmile, which gives a percentage when customers designate a charitable organization.

Mr. Landino thinks there are a number of ways for school board members to become involved with the foundation. When there are events, they can volunteer to help or pay to attend the event and if they don't have time to attend they can contribute by writing a check.

Mr. Elsier thanked Mr. Herb and Mrs. Bobenchik for all they do for the foundation. Mr. Elsier asked whether it would be possible to purchase tickets to the Harlem Wizards and give them to people that might not be able to afford to come on their own. Would we have a means to distribute them, such as through the Salvation Army, Boyertown Multi-Service, or local churches? If we are planning to do this, it must be done soon because the event is almost sold out. It may not work for this event but we can look into it for other events moving forward.

Mr. Breece asked for an explanation of how the board determines how the funds are allocated. Mrs. Bobenchik explained that they have received lists from each of the building principals with their needs. The foundation prices it out and sees what kind of money they get in. They fund those with the smallest price that have the most number of students impacted. The EITC money can only go to two programs.

Mr. Breece asked how they approached Weis and Decca to get donations. Mr. Herb explained that the EITC publishes a list of organizations that are involved with EITC. Dr. Faidley has a contact on the Berks

Business Education Coalition board that is an executive at Decca and the board sent him an email. Mrs. Bobenchik also reaches out to companies on the list for donations.

Mr. Stengle asked if the stalemate in the state budget has slowed things down for the foundation. Mr. Herb explained that the EITC funds are considered an expenditure of the Commonwealth. They have reached out to the legislatures to make sure they understand what the EITC funds are doing. The budget delay has caused some hiccups but the foundation did get funding for this period.

Mr. Breece would like to know more about successful education foundations. Mrs. Bobenchik stated there are a lot of districts in the Commonwealth that have education foundations. Some of them are run only by a board and don't have an executive director. There is one in Lewisburg that raises over $1 million dollars a year and has a paid staff of 5. Pottstown and Phoenixville both have extremely successful foundations. We don't need to reinvent the wheel, we can learn from the successful ones as they are willing to share information with us.

District Communications

Dr. Miller stated that the district is looking at how we can improve our communications. We have looked at what we are doing in terms of district wide communications and also what is being done at a building level.

The top section of the handout shows the tools we are using from the district perspective. One of the biggest pushes lately has been the Boyertown Essentials newsletter in hard copy form. We have a district Facebook feed and Twitter account. The district website is available anytime. We also provide an opportunity for feedback to us through the Inquiries and Comments Form on our website. We also record our committee meetings and board meetings so anyone who misses them can view them later.

The bottom section of the handout shows what is being done at the building level to communicate. Email blasts are the most economical and quickest means of communicating. Buildings also have Facebook, Twitter and newsletters.

Social media is present at both the district and building levels. The Facebook analytics in the handout are at the district level. Page Likes are the number of page likes we have had over time. Engagement is how many are actually accessing our content. Total Reach is how many people our message is getting to. We have gone from 671 to 1,127 followers since October. Page engagement is flat so we need to do a better job in that area. The weekly total reach started at 2,041 in October and is now at 16,466.

Twitter followings were at 950 in October. The spike in followers is consistent with when we started to post weather related school closings on Twitter. For the most part, Twitter followers don't unfollow so they continue to see what we put out.

The other tool that we use heavily is our district website. We are working through revisions to make it more mobile friendly so people that are using smartphones can access it and get a better experience. From 9/1 through 3/14, we have had 2,453,914 page views. 53.8% of the traffic is through the home page. 4% are hitting the BASH home page followed by Jr. High East at 2% and Jr. High West at 1%. Human Resources job postings and the BASH Staff Directory are also in the top 6 frequently accessed pages.

Mr. Landino commented that over the last 6-9 months there has been a noticeable increase in the level of communication which is a good thing. He's seen a lot more push communications about things going on in the district. The Boyertown Essentials newsletter is beneficial to get out to people that are stakeholders but don't deal with our district on a day-to-day basis. Diversity in communication needs to take place so we

can bring the community in as a whole.

Mrs. Usavage would like to see the communication summary handout on the website so that people can find out the different ways we communicate.

Mrs. Dennin commented on the way communication has changed over the years within the district. We have done a great job of communicating in different ways and keeping up with different types of electronic communication.

Mr. Elsier applauded the administration for hitting a lot of the different vehicles of communication. The challenge moving forward is increasing the Facebook usage to the building level. He is surprised at the number of people that do watch the meetings online. Moving forward we need to keep a pulse on social media that is being used.

Dr. Faidley stated that we will be utilizing YouTube to do short videos on the budget development process. Also, we are starting to see more usage of the Comments and Inquiries Form to ask about areas we are not pushing information out about.

Announcement of Discounted Internet
97% of our families report that they have access to the internet. On the district homepage, there is a link for discounted internet access. We are also working with building principals to get it out in hard copy form. About 20% of our district may qualify for this program to save money.

Mr. Breece stated that 85% of district households have no children in the district. This program is for everyone in the school district, not just for families with students.

Board Member Comments
Mrs. Usavage asked Mr. Breece if the 85% of households with no children figure is correct. Mr. Breece stated it is an estimate based on the number of households in the district and the number of students. Dr. Faidley will put the information in the weekly newsletter and report back at the next meeting.

Mr. Breece thanked Mr. Herb and Mrs. Bobenchik for sharing information about the Foundation for Boyertown Education.

Public Comment Period #2
There were no public comments.

Announcements

March 22, 2016	Policy Review Committee, Education Center, 7:00 p.m.
April 5, 2016	Finance Committee, Education Center, 6:00 p.m.
April 12, 2016	Facilities Committee, Education Center, 6:00 p.m.
April 12, 2016	Board of School Directors, Education Center, 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Breece adjourned the meeting at 6:59 p.m.