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

Ad-Hoc Committee for
School Board Election Plan Options

October 17, 2012 at 6:00 p.m.
Education Center, Board Room

<u>Meeting Summary</u>

Committee attendees: Barbara Hartford, Donna Usavage (chair); regrets: John Crossley
Public attendees: Linda Curry, Jill Dennin, Ruth Dierolf, Gwen Semmens

- To introduce the meeting, Donna reviewed the goals of the committee as outlined in the Board action to create the committee and expressed her personal goal for the committee to follow a fair process to come to a recommendation. The process has 3 sequential steps:
    - Establish criteria useful in evaluating election plan options
    - Brainstorm potential options
    - Evaluate options and make recommendation
  The potential outcomes could be to keep the 3-region model as-is, to adjust the 3-region model, or to implement a different model (i.e at-large, 9-region or hybrid).

- Available data was reviewed.
    - Population information from 2000 and 2010 Census data applied to the current 3 regions; projections for 2020 population modeling linear growth and also using the recent PEL study data. Donna noted that measuring the 3 regions in terms of registered voter data obtained from the Montgomery and Berks County Voter Services website resulted in very similar proportions to that of total population.
    - Baseline data from the PSBA School Board Survey of 2011 and data on multi-county school districts supplied by Mr. Szablowski.
        - The response rate for the survey was 65% of all PAschool districts. 63% use the at-large model, 29% use the 3-region model, 5% use a 9-region model and 3% use a hybrid at-large/regional model.
        - Looking at districts categorized as suburban resulted in similar proportions; districts with similar student population also had similar proportions. Only geographic size seemed to impact the numbers, with 51% at-large, 40% 3-region, 6% 9-region and 3% hybrid.
        - Looking at districts spanning multiple counties, 48% are at-large, 33% are 3-region, 15% are 9-region and 4% are hybrid.
    - Maps of each region from the Montgomery and Berks County Voter Services website.
    - Election Model Formats (aka Election Plan Options) prescribed by law, as outlined in the Board action to create the committee.

- Election Model Criteria – A brainstorming session was held with the public to list potential criteria associated with a 'good' election model. Then each member of the public was asked to identify their top 3 criteria from list generated.

  Election Plan criteria – list generated from brainstorming exercise

  - Can vote for whom you wish
  - Convenience to polling places for voters
  - Good socio-economic representation
  - Candidates known by all voters (3)
  - Clear/simple for voters (2)
  - Constituents feel that candidates represent entire district
  - Community feels close constituency relationship
  - Encourages community unity
  - Candidates should not be discouraged from running (2)
  - Voters feel they are being represented equally (3)
  - Candidates feel that they represent the entire district
  - Does not encourage candidates from just one geographic area or county (1)
  - Promotes election of candidates that understand diverse community viewpoints
  - Minimizes maintenance of election model
  - Change to election model does not impact current Board members

  Parenthesized numbers represent tally of top 3 priority from each member of the public present at the meeting.

- The public was asked for feedback about the approach to the meetings. Ideas generated:

  - Look at election models for schools districts that are multi-county, similar to BASD in student population and geographic size and categorized as rural and/or suburban. Noted that BASD is categorized by the state as Suburban.
  - Advertise on school website to generate more public interest.
  - Get feedback from Berks County election services about multi-county school district election models.
  - Add Policy 9110 to packet of information for the public.
  - Look into reasons for creating the 3-region model at the time of the jointure in the 1950's.

- Next Meeting – Wednesday, October 24th, 2012 at 6:00pm.
  Tentative agenda:
  - Finalize prioritized list of criteria
  - Develop list of potential election models