

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

**Ad-Hoc Committee for
School Board Election Plan Options**

October 24, 2012 at 6:00 p.m.
Education Center, Board Room

Meeting Summary

Committee attendees: John Crossley, Barbara Hartford, Donna Usavage (chair)

Public attendees: Donna Hoffman, Bert Van Anglen, Linda Curry, Joseph Nichols, Ingeborg E. Frecon, Robert Wood, Annette Truman, Sandy Wood, Brian Gilbert, Jill Dennin, Jane Stahl, Larry Farmer, Greg Gilbert, Ruth Dierolf, Gwen Semmens, Ron Christman.

- To introduce the meeting, Donna reviewed the goals and approach of the committee and progress to date.

The goals are as outlined in the Board action to create the committee and Donna expressed her personal goal for the committee to follow a fair process to come to a recommendation. The proposed approach 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). Community input is key to a successful outcome.

So far, the committee has reviewed the population data from the 2010 US census and a PSBA survey showing the election plans used by districts across the state. A list of criteria that defines a good election plan model was created using brainstorming with the public attendees.

The goals for today's meeting are to finalize and prioritize the list of criteria for a good election plan model and begin to propose potential voting plan models.

Per assignments from the 10/17 meeting, the committee is now advertised on the school website, Donna shared a closer assessment of election plan models used by multi-county schools with characteristics like Boyertown, policy 9110 was included in the materials for the committee, Donna spoke with the Director of Elections of Berks County about impacts of multi-county school election plan models, and the history of the original BASD jointure and school board formation was reviewed (with input from members of the public).

- The list of criteria defining a good election plan model was reviewed and some items were clarified. Each table of public participants was asked to agree on the most important criteria from the list, then the committee prioritized the list by most important, very important and important. The committee members agreed that while all items are important, the items deemed most and very important encompassed the other items.

Prioritized List of Election Plan Criteria

MOST IMPORTANT

- Encourages community unity
- Voters feel they are being represented equally (3)

VERY IMPORTANT

- Can vote for whom you wish
- Good socio-economic representation (diverse pool of candidates)
- Candidates feel that they represent the entire district

IMPORTANT

- Convenience to polling places for voters
- Candidates known by all voters (3)
- Clear/simple for voters (2)
- Constituents feel that candidates represent entire district
- Community feels close constituency relationship
- Candidates should not be discouraged from running (2)
- 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

- The committee then laid out the 5 options for election plan models – at-large, 3-region, 9-region, hybrid with 3 at-large and 2 reps/region, and hybrid with 6 at-large and 1 rep/region. Each table of public participants was asked for their recommendation. Each table’s response is listed below:
 - Table A recommended hybrid with 6 at-large and 1 rep/region. Although some favored the at-large model, they felt that this was a fair compromise, allowing voters to have a bigger say in voting for whom they wish while still allowing for a regionalized voice. They felt this would be clear for the voters as well.
 - Table B recommended hybrid with 3 at-large and 2 reps/region. Although some favored the current 3-region model, they felt this was an acceptable compromise.
 - Table C felt that a hybrid model with 6 at-large and 1 rep/region would be an acceptable compromise, they favored the at-large model because it allows Board members to focus on education.

The committee then discussed the feedback and decided that a hybrid model would be our recommendation. Preliminarily, the primary recommendation will be for a hybrid with 3 at-large and 2 reps/region but that the hybrid with 6 at-large and 1 reps/region will remain as a secondary recommendation. The committee members appreciated the public feedback acknowledging that

we had all moved from our coming-in positions after hearing the feedback.

- Next Meeting – Tuesday, October 30th, 2012 at 6:00pm.

Tentative agenda:

- Equalize regions
- Initiate transition plan (time permitting)