



Board of School Directors Committee Meetings Minutes

Wednesday, March 11, 2020

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Members present: Nicholas Braccio, Janet Flisak, Ken Keith, Thomas Kwiatkowski, Donna Scheuren, Courtney Barbieri

Members absent: Bill Brong and Matt Holliday

Others present: John Franzen, Frank T. Gallagher, Christopher Hey, Katie Kennedy-Reilly, Gina Pardovich, Brian Pawling, Megan Zweiback

1. Education-Personnel Committee

Mr. Kwiatkowski called the meeting to order at 6:37 PM

1.1 Future Ready PA Index - High School

Dr. Kennedy-Reilly announced the presentation of Future Ready data as it relates to the Souderton Area High School. She noted that also included in this presentation was information for North Montco Technical Career Center and that NMTCC Executive Director Gina Pardovich as also in attendance this evening, to discuss those that specific information in detail.

Dr. Kennedy-Reilly reminded the Committee that last year PDE moved to a more holistic view of student results, including a dashboard with various displays and categories. She also noted that the presentation this evening would be organized in the same manner as the elementary school presentations; showing student proficiency, averages and meeting goals.

The presentation covered academic achievement on the keystones with regard to overall performance and growth. This included ELA, Math and Science. English Language Growth and Attainment was reported on which is English Language Learners progress on the WIDA assessment. It was explained that English Language Learners who begin their educational career in Souderton early in elementary school, tend to do very well and exit the program, however students that start in high school tend to have a more difficult time grasping the material.

Graduation rate, rigorous courses of study, and Industry Based Learning were also topics covered during the presentation. The high school portion ended with current initiatives and partnerships that are providing students opportunities to experience the work force during high school with internships and even set themselves up for potential jobs right out of school. Dr. Kennedy-Reilly noted several area businesses that have partnered with the high school offering job shadows and internships to our students. Those partnerships assist in supporting our College and Career readiness initiatives.

NMTCC Executive Director Gina Pardovich spoke in support of the data being reported on behalf of the NMTCC students. Ms. Pardovich highlighted the above state average scoring and career standards benchmarks reached by many of the students.

Ms. Pardovich also noted several administrative tools that have promoted all programs to a higher standard. Those tools included a new student information system which records student attendance and collates all data received from all sending schools. She also noted the increase of rigor into the program and as well as updates that have been made to the Program of Study. Ms. Pardovich also noted the addition of a full time School to Career Coordinator, and ESL teacher, and teachers that assist students in achieving NOCTI certification in their course of choice.

A brief discussion occurred about NMTCC enrollment and Mrs. Pardovich said that currently all programs are at capacity from all five of the sending schools. She discussed the wait list that exists for some programs and the process by which the wait list is addressed. Student academics, attendance and discipline were defined as wait list criteria. Mrs. Barbieri asked about the plan for students who do not get into NMTCC? Dr. Kennedy-Reilly responded that the uniqueness of the high school Pathway Program offers opportunities for those students who do not get immediate acceptance at NMTCC. Dr. Gallagher commented on the quality of the guidance that is provided for students interested in the NMTCC program, assuring their placement supports success.

1.2 Curriculum Items

Dr. Kennedy-Reilly introduced two programs which will be implemented to grades 2-5 in the 2020-2021 school year; the Second Step Program and Foundations. The Second Step is a program rooted in social-emotional learning (SEL) that helps transform schools into supportive, successful learning environments. Dr. Kennedy-Reilly noted that the program is a fully integrated framework that is built upon four pillars: learning, empathy, emotion management, and problem solving skills. There are approximately 22 lessons that are delivered by the classroom teachers. She also noted that grant monies will support the program with professional development scheduled in the spring.

Foundations is scheduled for kindergarten and first grade implementation during the 2020-2021 school year and for second graders the following school year. Foundations is a supplemental phonics/spelling program delivered in general education classrooms through 30-minute daily lessons (Tier 1). Addressing the five areas of reading, plus handwriting and spelling, it is designed to be combined with a literature-based program to comprehensively address English Language Arts (comprehension and writing). It is research-based multi-sensory literacy instruction — explicit, systematic, and cumulative.

Mr. Braccio commented on the Second Step program and how it seems to align with the Towards the Future goals of our elementary schools. Mrs. Zweiback responded that the continuity of a program and common language which students will learn to recognize and understand, will be useful.

The Education-Personnel Meeting was adjourned at 7:58 PM

2. Technology Committee

2.1 Wide Area Network (WAN) Infrastructure Upgrades

Mr. Braccio called the meeting to order at 8:03 PM

Mr. Braccio explained that this technology discussion was basically a software discussion - impacting building to building functionality, it did not involve hardware.

Dr. Gallagher stated that a request for proposals was advertised for internet services, or Wide Area Network (WAN). He also noted that E-rate funding supports the upgrade to services.

A slide was shown that depicted how the school district network looks and how data transmission is distributed. Dr. Kennedy-Reilly showed a slide that proposes *Velocity* as the new provider, highlighting the advantages and fiscal impact of the proposed provider.

Mr. Pawling spoke about the E-rate funding and its eligibility for schools and other public entities. Mr. Pawling explained the bid process through E-rate and recommended the upgrade which is supported in cost savings to the school district.

Mr. Keith noted that the contract has language in it that is supportive of the school district and also allows the equipment purchases at 50% off cost. Mrs. Flisak asked about the length of the contract and Mr. Pawling responded that the costs associated are for 5 years with the renewal years available for years 6 to 10 without the infrastructure costs. Mr. Kwaitkowski asked about costs for construction fiber and Mr. Pawling said it is covered in their cost in years 1 to 5.

Mrs. Scheuren asked about an overlap period and Mr. Pawling said the other service would not be terminated until the new one was implemented. Mr. Pawling noted that the E-rate approval needs to occur by March 25 and would be ratified at the Board Action Meeting on March 26th.

The Committee agreed to move forward for ratification.

Mr. Braccio adjourned the meeting at 8:23 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Brian R. Pawling
Board Secretary/Director of Business Affairs