

Shared Services Meeting  
Minutes of April 2, 2012

PRESENT: Brandon Hartman, Robert Ridall, Lance Wolfe, Penny Lenig-Zerby (Benton)  
William Berger, Chris Farr, Dean Kelchner, Frank Suchwala, Kathee Stark (Millville)

The meeting began at 6:30 pm after informal introductions. Dr. Stark began by discussing a past initiative when the two districts shared the services of a Speech and Language professional. She also discussed the lack of availability that would occur as a result of sharing the services of administrative personnel. It is also quite likely that there would need to be a responsible person at each site. Present initiatives include enrollment of Benton students in a life skills class in Millville and a sharing of transportation to Milton PATH. Millville is presently considering the opening of an emotional support classroom at the elementary level. Benton has at least one, possibly two students who would likely attend this program.

Several ideas were offered for shared services, with discussion of each option. One of these was to share inventories of mobile equipment. It was deemed as unnecessary for one district to have to rent equipment the other owns. Contracts would have to be developed to address issues of liability in case of damage. Those with responsibility for supervision of facilities will meet or share information.

Another possibility is a co-op agreement for some sports. Specifically mentioned were girls' soccer and field hockey. Benton would be the home team for field hockey, while Millville would be the host school for soccer. Transportation, uniforms, and equipment would be some of the issues which would need to be addressed. The athletic directors and principals will be contacted to develop estimates for this initiative.

Expansion of shared transportation was also discussed. This will require a study of the boundaries between the two districts to determine possible revision of bus routes serving those border areas. Those responsible for transportation will meet to review documents and make recommendations.

To consider shared services for personnel, it will be necessary to begin with a review of the job descriptions from each district. One of the guiding questions will be whether the person is being asked to function at high levels of expertise at all times. If he/she is not doing so, then the job description and the position need to be studied. Some of the positions mentioned included Business Manager, School Psychologist, Special Education Supervisor, Transportation Coordinator, Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds, and Cafeteria Manager. The last position would depend on the decision made by Benton concerning privatization of cafeteria services and the company selected, if applicable, to operate the food service program.

The superintendents will facilitate meetings between the responsible parties in the districts for each of the areas discussed above. They will assume responsibility for review of job descriptions.

The issue of merger was also discussed briefly. While the primary focus is on shared services, everyone at the meeting recognized that merger may be the ultimate result. PDE will be contacted to determine the cost of their services to conduct the study process.

The next meeting will be scheduled upon the advice of the superintendents and will be based on compilation of reports from the various personnel indicated above. The meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathee Stark