BIG SPRING SCHOOL DISTRICT

Newville, Pennsylvania

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF THE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

MONDAY, AUGUST 3, 2009

The Big Spring School District is an equal opportunity education institution and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, and disability in its activities, programs, or employment practices as required by Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504. For information regarding civil rights or grievance procedures, or for information regarding services, activities, and facilities that are accessible to and usable by handicapped persons, contact the Superintendent of Schools, Title IX and Section 504 Coordinator, 45 Mt. Rock Road, Newville, PA 17241, at (717) 776-2412.

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Committee of the Whole of the Board of School Directors for the Big Spring School District met in the Big Spring High School Large Group Room, Room 140, at 7:03 P.M. with President Wilbur Wolf, Jr., presiding. Five (5) directors present: Wilbur Wolf, Jr., President; William Swanson, Vice President; Saundra Rosenberry Deaver; William Piper; and Richard Roush. Robert Lee Barrick, Secretary; Terry Lopp, Treasurer; Kingsley Blasco; and Richard Norris were absent.

Others in attendance: Richard Fry, Superintendent; Jeanne Temple, Assistant Superintendent; Kevin Roberts, Director of Curriculum/Instruction and Educational Technology; Richard E. Kerr, Jr., Business Manager; David Roberts, Technology Department; and Brenda Line, Board Minutes.

II. PRESENTATION

Website Rollout – Mr. Kevin Roberts, Director of Curriculum/Instruction, and Mr. David Roberts, Secondary Technology Integrator

Mr. Kevin Roberts and Mr. Dave Roberts offered a computer presentation of the new District website, and they answered Board members' questions. The following items were noted:

A. Almost 106 staff members have been trained in the use of the new District website (50 percent of the staff). The remainder of the staff will be trained by the spring of 2010.
B. Any good website is a work in progress; therefore, Big Spring School District's website will continue to be changed and improved.
C. 70 percent of middle school and high school parents use the PowerSchool program to monitor students' grades and attendance. The District will offer parent training in an effort to improve use of PowerSchool
D. All of the website features reviewed this evening are available to the public.

II. PRESENTATION (Continued)

E. The new Web address for the District's website is bigspringsd.org. The old website address, bigspring.k12.pa.us, will link to the new website.

F. The "Welcome" tab on the website features the following pages: Staff directory (containing only information related to the staff member's name, position, and District email, along with information permitted by the staff member), Job Vacancies, Right-to-Know, Printable Calendar, Directions, District Strategic Plan Summary 2007-2013, and School District Information

G. The "Our Schools" tab features a page for each school that is maintained by personnel in that school. The information listed for each school is pertinent to that particular school, including a detailed calendar of events for that building.

H. The "School Board" tab features the Board meeting agenda, Board minutes, Board policy, and Board meeting dates.

I. The "Departments" tab features athletics, business office, curriculum and instruction, maintenance, technology, and counseling

J. The "Community" tab features organizations that support the District; for instance, the Bulldog Foundation.

K. The "Resources" tab features GroupWise webmail, PowerSchool parent portal, and PowerSchool teacher portal.

L. The "District Calendar" tab shows a detailed calendar of District activities.

M. The RSS icon allows individuals to subscribe at no charge to receive automatic updates of that web page.

N. WebQuests provides safe content for students to research important events.

O. Group pages feature information regarding clubs, activities, sports, etc.

P. The website's email system is secure and monitors and reports to the administrator inappropriate behavior, such as cyber bullying and profanity.

Q. The interactive website provides teachers with the opportunity to engage in blogs, establish wikis, and present information to large groups of students at one time via email or discussion forums.

R. Teachers appear to be excited about the potential of the website.

S. Parents could sign up to be notified via email when a certain teacher page is updated.

T. The website's effect on a teacher's workload is unknown at this time; however, it is believed that the functions of the website could reduce a teacher's workload, similar to the way PowerSchool reduced inquiries from parents because information regarding grades and attendance is now readily available.

U. Teachers would be able to present information to an entire class of students via email with the click of the email button.

V. The new website places the teacher pages and teacher/student email addresses under the umbrella of the District. Teachers would be required to use the website to create their school-related web pages.

W. The six hours of technology training outlined in the teachers' contract has been valuable in educating the staff on the features of the new website.

X. Both new and veteran teachers seem to be adapting to the features available on the new website.

Y. The new website is user friendly; however, it is different from the former website format. The District's former website was in operation for eight years, and it is reasonable to expect that there will be growing pains related to implementing the new website.

Z. Teachers who were unable to attend website training sessions during the summer will have the opportunity to attend the training in the fall or the spring.

III. PREVIEW OF THE AGENDA

Combine and Address
President Wolf requested that the Board address XIII., NEW BUSINESS,
A., PERSONNEL CONCERNS, Items A-1 through A-6, as a single action item; Items C
and D as a single action item; and Items E and F as a single action item.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Swanson, seconded by Roush to adjourn to Executive Session to address a
grievance issue. Roll call vote: Voting Yes: Deaver, Piper, Roush, Swanson, and Wolf.
Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:46 P.M.

_____
Robert Lee Barrick, Secretary