

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
BRANDYWINE HEIGHTS AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
SPECIAL MEETING**

August 18, 2014

A Special Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Brandywine Heights Area School District was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by President Kenneth Heffner.

The meeting opened with Pledge of Allegiance.

**Recording Secretary called the roll:**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mr. Bieber	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ms. Eyrich	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mr. Groff
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mrs. Grossman (6:06 pm)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mr. Heffner	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mrs. Huhn
<input type="checkbox"/> Mrs. MacMillan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mr. Porr	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mr. Rothermel

**Administration Present:**

- Mr. Andrew Potteiger, Superintendent
- Mrs. Nancy Krauss, Business Manager/Board Secretary
- Mrs. Mary Darrach, Director of Special Education
- Mrs. Carolyn Hanych, Director of Brandywine Virtual Academy
- Dr. Kathy Johnson, Middle School Principal
- Ms. Stephanie Kelly, Elementary/Intermediate Assistant Principal
- Mr. Robert Kurzweg, Director of Athletics
- Mrs. Karen Long, Elementary/Intermediate Principal
- Mr. Thomas Voelker, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Technology
- Mr. Michael Wetzel, Director of Buildings and Grounds
- Mr. Josh Ziatyk, Assistant High School Principal

**Visitors:** Tracy Fandl, Mertztown, Ron Devlin, Reading, Edward Carter, Topton, Andrea Moyer, Topton, Heather Lampron, Topton, Mrs. Sexton, Topton.

**PRESENTATION**

**Facility Analysis Study** – Superintendent Andrew Potteiger presented the results of an administrative facilities analysis to the board to address future facility use options. Mr. Potteiger provided data on enrollment trends, staffing and instructional needs followed by facility configuration options with a list of pro’s and con’s based on educational benefit, financial considerations, overall building and staffing efficiency.

Three options were identified. The first option is to maintain three buildings which requires the cost output to maintain them as well as the annual operating costs. The benefit of this option is that there is adequate space, the three buildings are located in close proximity, they are in good condition and it allows for enrollment and program growth/flexibility. This option is an ideal academic set up from a developmentally/age-appropriate academic perspective. It allows for focused academic settings with the needs of the child and building structure being linked closely together.

The second option is to consolidate into two buildings establishing a K-7 elementary/middle center and a 8-12 secondary center by entering into a building project to add onto the existing High School. The benefit of this approach is the reduced cost implications of running three buildings through annual operation costs as well as long term maintenance. This also allows for increased efficiencies with staff as teachers with like

certifications are in the same building. This option is not recommended by administration because the grade configuration is not developmentally/age appropriate and less staff efficient.

The third option is to consolidate into two buildings establishing a K-6 elementary center and a 7-12 secondary center by entering into a building project to add onto the existing High School. The benefit of this approach is the reduced cost implications of running three buildings through annual operation costs as well as long term maintenance. This also allows for increased efficiencies with staff as teachers with like certifications are in the same building. It also allows for efficiencies in transportation with a reduced amount of travel time between buildings which can yield additional instructional time and less time on the bus for students. This approach also allows for a solid academic program with room for enrollment and program growth. The cost savings of reducing a building would offset the cost of an addition and have a long term financial gain for the District. There would be additional costs to retrofit the Kemp building into a K-6 elementary center.

Mr. Potteiger suggested three actions if the Board is interested in further exploration of the options presented.

1. A formal facility study be conducted by an outside professional expert to gain further insight which will lead to better decision making.
2. A long term enrollment study be completed by an outside professional expert to gain further insight which will lead to better decision making, and
3. A time frame should be established for the next steps to ensure discussion and decisions around this initiative remains current and active.

To increase the efficiency of room placement in the Kemp building by placing grade levels together in common areas, Mr. Potteiger recommended moving the Central Office space utilized by the Superintendent offices and the Business offices to one consolidated location. This will greatly help in the overall efficiency of the staff time in the Superintendent offices and Business office. Currently there is redundancy in space such as separate personnel files requiring a lot of cross checking of files. There is also wasted time in transitions between offices to have conversations on projects. Because of concerns which have been persistent for numerous years, it is necessary to consolidate for efficiency and allow more ease of accessibility for public access to Central Offices. It is recommended that this change needs to be done regardless of facility decisions.

### **Board Comment**

Mr. Bieber asked questions about plumbing, and code as a reflection of increased student population. Mr. Porr asked about the use of the cafeteria.

Mr. Bieber posed questions about operation and utility costs if an addition would be added to the High School. Mrs. Krauss noted that part of a facility study would be projection of utility and operating costs.

Mr. Rothermel commented on the potential annual savings of \$600,000 with a K-6/7-12 configuration. That represents about a 10 year payback, about 2% of the district budget. If there were greater savings, closer to 10%, further exploration would be warranted. He also suggested an enrollment study be done. Previously the PEL report was thought not to be accurate, however now that we look back, it was relatively accurate.

Mr. Heffner noted that the district may be challenged by unforeseen obstacles, such as sinkholes or other natural challenges. Mr. Heffner also asked about the current use of classrooms in the Elementary School. Mr. Potteiger noted they have only one room left unoccupied.

Mrs. Huhn asked about the number of classrooms needed if an addition were put onto the High School. Mr. Potteiger confirmed at least 12 classrooms would be needed. Mrs. Huhn suggested changes in education program delivery, such as our Virtual Academy, may change the number of additional classrooms needed.

### **Public Comment**

Mrs. Andrea Moyer and Mrs. Sexton oppose any changes and are concerned with the grade level configuration. Ms. Tracy Fandl commented that Wyomissing and Hamburg have a similar grade level configurations as what was proposed for the Grades 7-12 model and suggests consulting with other districts for advice. Mrs. Heather Lampron asked the board consider the downfalls of sharing bathrooms with Kindergarten through 7<sup>th</sup> graders. Student Michael Sexton asked the board consider a possible increase in bullying that may occur with a 7-12 grade configuration.

Mr. Heffner summarized that there does not seem to be interest to entertain a facilities study for the purpose of reconfiguring the school district at this time. Mr. Heffner asked that administration continue to monitor the district enrollment and facility usage.

Noting the Board would not likely pursue a reconfiguration of the schools, Mr. Potteiger suggested the Board allow administration to explore consolidating central office location. There was general agreement that efforts to combine the offices be pursued.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Heffner also announced there would be an executive session following the board meeting to discuss personnel issues and an informational conference on district goals.

With no further action, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

---

Approved

---

Nancy K. Krauss, Board Secretary  
Katharine K. Seip, Recording Secretary