

## Big Sandy Vocational Advisory Council Report 2019-2020

The Big Sandy School District's philosophy concerning education encompasses the fact that all students need 21st century skills in order to function in an ever-changing society centered on technology, as well as providing the opportunities to participate in a variety of educational programs which address and challenge various types of learners. The District Committee is very proud of these programs, and student success provides the evidence to support their rigor and quality of instruction.

Two state funded, vocational programs are currently offered at Big Sandy School: Jr. high/high school business/technology and junior high/high school industrial arts. In addition, auto mechanics is offered to our high school students. All professional staff members involved in teaching these funded programs are certified with at least 15 years of experience who continually investigate ways to improve. We appreciate the dedication and expertise that these individuals bring to our district and students.

### Secondary Business/Technology/FBLA

A variety of classes are offered through our business department which are taught by Mrs. Sue Snyder and Mr. Tim Tucker. Kindergarten through twelfth grade students participate in technology, business classes, or both. Classes offered by Mrs. Snyder include: Junior High technology, Graphic Design, Computer Applications, Elementary Technology, and Computer Science. Mr. Tucker's classes are Vegas, Introduction to Computer Science/Coding, Computer Technology, Kindergarten Technology, and Senior Seminar. Currently, there are 61 high school students taking business/technology courses.

The technology department continues to review and upgrade the district's technological plan. Mr. Tucker is the technology director, and the BOCES offers support as well. For the 19-20 school year, 33 laptops were purchased for teachers to replace their current ones. Three mobile labs are available for teachers/ students to utilize, and about 80% of classroom teachers have laptops available in their classrooms for student use. To date, there are approximately 300 laptops available in our district. After being awarded a grant in the spring, 29 access points were purchased and installed during the summer. Furthermore, due to the generosity of the Alan Lasater Outreach Foundation, a CAD program was purchased and will be implemented during the 2020-2021 school year. This program will enhance both the IA and business programs.

The Future Business Leaders of America local chapter is the leadership strand for the business vocational program. There are 11 student members under the supervision of Mr. Tucker and Mrs. Sielaff. Throughout the years, this has been a successful program with students winning at the district, state, and national levels. This year, students will be participating in objective tests as well as preparing projects to compete at districts in February. Winners at the district level will move on to the state competition, and if placement is achieved, students will then compete at Nationals which will be held in Utah this year.

In order to be able to participate in these various competitions and in an effort to lessen the financial burden on our district, FBLA has completed various fundraisers. These fundraisers include: members working for community members (similar to senior auction) and providing a dinner for students and their families before the high school play.

## Industrial Arts

The industrial arts program has been led by Mr. Dave Schmidt for 27 years. Currently, sixty-eight students are enrolled ranging from 7th-12th grades. In order to meet the needs of students, Mr. Schmidt teaches all seven periods of the day. Since there are so many students, more storage is needed for projects. Students begin the year learning and passing safety tests before they are allowed to operate any of the machinery. After completing this step, students begin designing a project to build, and the rest of the year is spent completing their project. Students are responsible for paying for required materials, and Mr. Schmidt has an inventory that students are able to utilize. At the end of the year, all projects are entered to compete at the East Central BOCES Industrial Arts Fair in Limon, Colorado.

Industrial Arts students are developing skills that they will use in the future. All students learn how to design, measure, build, and operate a variety of power and hand tools. For post-secondary options, Mr. Schmidt encourages students to explore the teaching field of industrial arts or other vocational programs such as wood working, construction, or other related fields. Leadership, cooperative learning, and a strong work ethic are skills learned and practiced on a daily basis in this program. The junior and senior students guide and assist younger students on projects which promotes collaboration in the classroom.

In an effort to strive towards improvement and offer more opportunities for students to become marketable in the workforce, Mr. Schmidt, along with support from the Alan Lasater Outreach Foundation, purchased a JessEm router table to further enhance this program. Students who are trained on this type of equipment become 90% more employable in the work force after graduation.

Skills USA is the leadership strand for this vocational program. This was introduced last year and has provided new opportunities for industrial arts students.

## Auto Mechanics

Our transportation director, Mr. Jerry Dole, instructs our auto mechanics program. This year, there are 20 students who participate in automotive service and maintenance as well as some basic welding. Ongoing projects include replacing engines, conducting winter vehicle checklists, and making small repairs on cars such as performing oil changes, and changing brakes.

In an effort to remain current with advances in technology regarding mechanics, equipment has been purchased, thanks to the generous donations from the Alan Lasater Outreach Foundation. The Foundation awarded \$8300 to be used in our auto mechanics program. With this money, the following were purchased: 2 portable lifts, tire pressure monitoring system scan tool, professional automotive scanner, coveralls, and four stainless steel work tables.

Post-secondary options are available for students enrolled in Big Sandy's auto mechanics classes. Mr. Dole has a number of contacts at vocational colleges and with various employers if students desire to pursue auto mechanics, diesel mechanics, or welding after graduation.