Big Sandy Vocational Advisory Council Report 2021-2022

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 veteran teachers bringing much experience into the classroom. We appreciate the dedication and expertise that these individuals bring to our district and students.

<u>Secondary Business/Technology/FBLA</u>

A variety of classes are offered through our business department which are taught by Mr. Tim Tucker. Kindergarten through twelfth grade students participate in technology, business classes, or both. Mr. Tucker's classes consist of Introduction to Coding, Computer Science, Vegas, JH Technology, Economics, and Personal Workforce Readiness/Senior Seminar. Currently, there are 68 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. Last year, 130 Chromebooks were purchased. Students in 3rd-8th grades have their own Chromebooks to use throughout the school day. Chromebooks are also available for sped students and high school science students. In addition, three mobile labs are available for teachers/ students to utilize, and 100% of classroom teachers have laptops available in their classrooms for student use. To date, there are approximately 300 laptops available in our district. The 29 access points that were installed previously have helped improve accessibility. In addition, Industrial Arts continues to work with the Technology department in providing a CAD program for students. The program provides students with the ability to design Industrial Arts projects. This was made possible by a generous donation from the Alan Lasater Outreach Foundation. In the near future, we will need to purchase more panel screens due to the fact that our current interactive projectors are going out and are now obsolete.

The Future Business Leaders of America local chapter is the leadership strand for the business vocational program. There are 17 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 and then at the state level. If placement is achieved at state, students will then compete at Nationals which will be held in Chicago, Illinois in June 2022.

Industrial Arts

The Industrial Arts program has been led by Mr. Dave Schmidt for 29 years. Currently, sixty-three students are enrolled ranging from 7th-12th grades. Students begin the year learning and passing safety tests before they are allowed to operate any of the machinery. After successfully completing the tests, students begin designing a project to build, and the rest of the year is spent on completing their project. Students are responsible for paying for their 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 RISE grant, purchased a Helical Laser Engraver to further enhance this program last year. This year, Mr. Schmidt was able to secure the purchase of a CNC Router. The Alan Lasater Outreach Foundation has also been partnering with our IA program. Students who are trained on this type of equipment become 90% more employable in the work force after graduation.

Mr. Bollar, a former business owner of Diversified Machine Systems, volunteers his time to work with and teach CNC programming as well as use of the router to students. Recently, eight IA students were able to tour DMS courtesy of Mr. Bollar. His contributions to our students and school have been extremely valuable in preparing our students for the workforce, and we appreciate all he has done to enhance the IA program.

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 sixteen students who participate in automotive service and maintenance as well as some basic welding. Ongoing projects include conducting winter vehicle checklists, and making small repairs on cars such as performing oil changes, and changing brakes. On a larger scale, students replaced a fuel pump, removed the transmission and replaced torque convertors in it, and replaced an exhaust system on a 98 dodge 1500 pickup. An alternator was also replaced on a 1987 Cadillac Deville.

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.