

Big Sandy Vocational Advisory Council Report 2022-2023

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.

Secondary Business/Technology/FBLA

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/Movie Studio, Economics, and Personal Workforce Readiness/Senior Seminar. Junior high technology is taught by Mrs. Stodola, and elementary is taught by Mrs. Ashmore. Currently, there are forty-four 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. Additional Chromebooks were purchased this year. Currently, each elementary and junior high student has their own Chromebook to use on a daily basis. Five high school classrooms have one to one Chromebook usage as well. In addition, three stationary labs are available for teachers/students to utilize, and 100% of classroom teachers have laptops. To date, there are approximately two hundred laptops and three hundred Chromebooks available in our district. Internet accessibility has been improved through the installation of additional access points in the building. In addition, seven panel screens have been purchased and installed in some classrooms to replace the interactive projectors that have now become obsolete. More will need to be replaced in the near future.

The Future Business Leaders of America local chapter is the leadership strand for the business vocational program. There are twenty-five student members under the supervision of Mr. Tucker and Ms. Sielaff. Throughout the years, this has been a successful program with students winning at the district, state, and national levels. At the end of March, eighteen students competed at the state competition in Denver, CO. They presented projects in Broadcast Journalism, Website design, Computer Game and Simulation, and Parliamentary Procedures. Other members took objective tests in Cyber security, Parliamentary Procedures, Investments and Security, Human Resource Management, Accounting 2, and Business Procedures. Four members qualified for the national competition which will be held at the end of June in Atlanta, Georgia. These students will be competing in Broadcast Journalism and Computer Game and Simulation. Last year, three students competed at Nationals.

Industrial Arts

The Industrial Arts program has been led by Mr. Dave Schmidt for 30 years. Currently, sixty-eight 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 also 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 promote 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, continues to update and improve equipment. This year, Mr. Schmidt was able to secure the purchase an upgraded version of Corel Draw for the laser engraver. 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, continues to volunteer his time to work with and teach CNC programming as well as use of the router to students. Master-Cam is a computer aided drafting program that was instituted last year and is renewed each year, courtesy of Mr. Bollar. In addition, he has increased our inventory of router bits as well. 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 2 years ago 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 fifteen 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, tire repair and changing brakes.

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.

Mr. Dole will be retiring at the end of this year. We appreciate all of the time and effort that he has devoted to this program, and he will be sorely missed. Mr. Hoops has been hired as

the Transportation Director beginning next year; however, Mr. Hoops began the job in January so that he could “shadow” Mr. Dole and learn all of the facets of the job.