Big Sandy Vocational Advisory Council Report 2025-2026

The Big Sandy School District is committed to preparing all students with the essential 21st-century skills needed to succeed in an increasingly complex, technology-driven world. The district prioritizes diverse and engaging learning opportunities designed to meet the needs of a wide range of learning styles, ensuring that all students are both challenged and supported. The District Committee takes pride in the strength of these programs, with student achievement reflecting the rigor and quality of instruction provided.

Currently, Big Sandy Schools offers one state-funded vocational program in Business/ Technology, led by a highly experienced and dedicated educator whose expertise significantly enhances student learning. While vocational offerings in Industrial Arts and Auto Mechanics are not presently available due to certification requirements, steps are being taken to expand these opportunities. Mr. Thieman is actively pursuing the necessary certification to reinstate this program in the near future.

The district values the commitment and professionalism of its educators, whose dedication plays a critical role in shaping student success. Through their efforts, Big Sandy continues to deliver high-quality, career-focused educational experiences that prepare students for future academic and professional endeavors.

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

Big Sandy Schools offer a comprehensive selection of business and technology courses, led by Mr. Tim Tucker. Students from kindergarten through twelfth grade participate in a range of classes, including technology, Introduction to Coding, Computer Science, Vegas/Movie Studio, Economics, and Personal Workforce Readiness/Senior Seminar. Junior high technology instruction is provided by Mrs. Sedlak, while elementary K-3 is taught by Mrs. Allen. Mrs. Sedlak also teaches fourth-grade technology. Currently, approximately 65 high school students are enrolled in business and technology courses.

The technology department remains committed to reviewing and upgrading the district's technological infrastructure. As the district's Technology Director, Mr. Tucker oversees technological advancements, with additional support from BOCES. Last year, Mr. Tucker, with the help of Mr. Wilson, applied for and received a $300,000 grant which will provide new teacher laptops, new interactive screens and white boards. Mr. Tucker is currently purchasing this equipment, and it will be installed this summer with the goal of being in full use when school begins in the fall.

Technology integration across the district continues to expand. Every elementary and junior high student has access to their own Chromebook, and five high school classrooms now operate on a 1:1 Chromebook model. Additionally, three stationary computer labs are available for student and teacher use, and 100% of classroom teachers have laptops. The district currently maintains approximately 200 laptops and 300 Chromebooks. Internet accessibility has also improved with the installation of additional access points. Furthermore, the department has acquired two 3D printers, a large-format poster printer, a laser engraver, and a Cricut machine through a Perkins grant, enhancing hands-on learning opportunities.

The Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) chapter serves as the leadership component of the business vocational program. Under the guidance of Mr. Tucker and Mrs. Townley, the program has a strong track record of success, with students excelling at district, state, and national competitions. This year, 21 students were involved, and 16 recently competed at the state competition in Denver. They presented projects in Finance, Event Planning, Parliamentary Procedures, Community Service, and Digital Video Production while one other participated in an Agribusiness objective test. Two students, Teague Jones and Kelsi Harr, will represent our school at Nationals this summer.

The business and technology programs at Big Sandy continue to provide students with valuable skills, hands-on experience, and leadership opportunities, preparing them for success in both academic and professional pursuits.