

CENTENNIAL BOARD OF COOPERATIVE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**January 20, 2011
MEETING MINUTES**

1.0 OPENING OF MEETING

The Board of Directors of the Centennial Board of Cooperative Educational Services met on January 20, 2011 at the Centennial BOCES Office – 2020 Clubhouse Drive – Greeley, Colorado.

1.1 CALL TO ORDER

Mr. John Dudley, Board President, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

1.2 SELF INTRODUCTIONS

1.3 ROLL CALL

- 1) Julie Chesnut, Platte Valley RE-7
- 2) Rob Carruth, Morgan RE-3
- 3) Mike Dixon, Brush RE-2J
- 4) John Dudley, Ault-Highland RE-9
- 5) Sheryl Groves, Weldon Valley RE-20J
- 6) Kelly Johnston, Briggsdale RE-10
- 7) Mike Steinbach, Wiggins RE-50J
- 8) Tim Swain, Eaton RE-2
- 9) Scott Tietmeyer, Pawnee RE-12
- 10) Nolan Troudt, Alternate, Prairie RE-11

Board Members (or alternates) absent:

- 1) Marsha Harris, Weld RE-1
- 2) Tony Paglia, Park R-3
- 3) Rod Schmidt, St Vrain RE-1J
- 4) Don Wilson, Johnstown / Milliken RE-5J

Superintendents present:

- 1) Rob Ring, Ault / Highland RE-9
- 2) Glenn McClain, Platte Valley RE-7
- 3) Jo Barbie, Weld RE-1
- 4) Greg Wagers, Morgan RE-3
- 5) Bob Petterson, Weldon Valley RE-20J
- 6) Priscilla Huston, Brush RE-2
- 7) Bill Hungenburg, Assistant Superintendent RE-5J

BOCES Staff present:

Randy Zila, Executive Director
Mary Ellen Good, Federal Programs Director
Jocelyn Walters, Special Ed Director
Christine Muldoon, Learning Services Coordinator
Melony Sandquist, Executive Administrative Assistant
Bela Russell, Administrative Support
Susan Mattos-Cunningham, Business Services

1.4 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Tim Swain moved to approve the Agenda as presented. Seconded by Mr. Mike Steinbach.

The motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote: [Julie Chestnut, yes; Rob Carruth, yes; Mike Dixon, yes; John Dudley, yes; Sheryl Groves, yes; Kelly Johnston, yes; Mike Steinbach, yes; Tim Swain, yes; Scott Tietmeyer, yes; Nolan Troudt, yes]

1.5 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Julie Chestnut moved to approve the Minutes from the November 18, 2010 Meeting. Seconded by Ms. Sheryl Groves.

The motion passed by a majority roll call vote: [Julie Chestnut, yes; Rob Carruth, abstain; Mike Dixon, yes; John Dudley, yes; Sheryl Groves, yes; Kelly Johnston, yes; Mike Steinbach, yes; Tim Swain, yes; Scott Tietmeyer, abstain; Nolan Troudt, abstain]

2.0 SAC REPORT

Dr. Glenn McClain reported on the January 7, 2011 SAC Meeting:

- Presentation by Christine Muldoon and Aims Community College staff regarding the Global Assessment Certificate and how that compares to the CBOCES / Aims High School Diploma Program
- Presentation and PowerPoint from John Conley of Statewide Internet Portal Authority and the services they are offering to school districts
- Jhon Penn from CDE provided an update and was available to answer questions

3.0 ACTION ITEMS

3.1 Learning Services request for name change to Innovative Education Services

Mr. Rob Carruth moved to approve the name change from Learning Services to Innovative Education Services. Seconded by Mike Steinbach.

The motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote: [Julie Chestnut, yes; Rob Carruth, yes; Mike Dixon, yes; John Dudley, yes; Sheryl Groves, yes; Kelly Johnston, yes; Mike Steinbach, yes; Tim Swain, yes; Scott Tietmeyer, yes; Nolan Troudt, yes]

4.0 REPORTS / DISCUSSION

Dr. Zila's full report to the board is as follows. Each item in the report was reviewed by Dr. Zila and he addressed questions from the Board as they arose.

After a thorough review and discussion of all options presented, the Board made decisions as follows:

- Dr. Zila is to proceed immediately with plans for moving the Longmont staff to the Greeley office
- Future Leadership of CBOCES will be pursued under Administrative Options B & D
- Dr. Zila will present a detailed report at the February 17th Board meeting with his recommendations on how to move forward with Options B & D in the search for a new Executive Director

Executive Director Report
Dr. Randy Zila

Prepared For
Centennial BOCES Board of Directors and
Superintendents Advisory Council

This report has been prepared after six months of collective observation as the Interim Executive Director of Centennial BOCES. Following are my recommendations for future direction along with suggestions for possible options in moving forward.

The state of Centennial BOCES when I arrived was one of high anxiety, fear of the unknown, and alarmed by the departure of the previous Executive Director. The financial picture was weakened by over expenditures in the technology department, closing of Weld Opportunity High School, and a few other variables such as delayed grant reimbursements and the lack of cash flow necessary to support other programs. The three major departments of Special Education, Federal and Migrant Programs, and Learning Services are extending much effort to cover costs and maintain quality of programs.

Migrant Programs are thriving due to the increase of state funding over the previous year along with the program being expanded to more northern and eastern districts in the state. We are working with Northeast and East Central BOCES in this area to identify and locate migrant students and families.

Following are the priorities and goals for each department:

Federal Programs

Organizational Vision:

We are stronger than the sum of our parts! By utilizing a cohesive service delivery model, we provide innovative, cost-effective services aligned with the needs and priorities of school districts, families, and the communities we serve.

Department Vision:

Federal Programs play a key role in creating conditions needed to strengthen unity within and across our organization. Collectively, we have the necessary knowledge, skills, experience, and tools to deliver service excellence.

Priorities and Goals:

- To strengthen relationships with key local, regional, state, and federal partners by improving collaboration and communication, with the goal of enhancing student success for marginalized students and their families
- Increase the amount of grant funding we receive to enhance both the quality and quantity of services we are able to offer
- Utilize data from meaningful evaluations to improve the effectiveness of our programs and increase departmental efficiency

Special Education

Priorities and Goals:

- Maintain "Meets Requirements" on the statewide determination on the State Performance Plan
- Fully implement RtI eligibility criteria in order to accurately identify students with a specific learning disability
- Ensure special education students have access to high quality, evidence-based instructional strategies and curriculum in the areas of reading, math, writing, and affective education
- Work collaboratively with general education partners to close the achievement gap reported between students identified as being eligible for special education services and the general population
- Offer a continuum of services within the BOCES member school districts to meet the needs of students
- Provide meaningful, professional development opportunities to special education staff in order to improve student performance outcomes
- Reduce the number of suspensions/expulsions of students in special education as reported in the annual Special Education Discipline report
- Improve post-secondary results for students in special education with an increase in post-secondary education participation and full-time employment

Special Education continues to deal with a turbulent job market in finding highly qualified professionals, as is the case with many other school organizations.

The Transition School is providing services for students in the 18 to 22 year range who are learning important skills as they enter adulthood and strive for more independence. The department is also investigating a Center Based Program for highly special needs students.

Special Education finds it difficult at times to dialog with districts and reach agreement on services provided. Every district is different and certainly presents unique requests and desires from the CBOCES. Those are somewhat complicated discussions to have, striving to meet Superintendents expectations, yet making certain that everyone maintains compliance with IDEA and CDE. New requirements are introduced every year, there are many ambiguities, and it is tedious to keep up with all the changes. This, however, is not new to CBOCES and will likely continue down this pathway. Communication and ownership of issues is always a worthy and difficult conversation.

Learning Services

Priorities and Goals:

Learning Services is attempting to determine needs of districts and how to meet those needs. Currently, the program for new administrators is being brought to a higher standard. Alternative programs such as the Centennial BOCES High School Diploma Program (often referred to as the AIMS High School Diploma Program) have gone through significant changes. Learning Services is working with Aims CC on creating a more rigorous program and no will longer will open enrollment from students who are currently enrolled in a non-member district, a decision agreed upon by the SAC. More opportunities are being explored to offer other alternative school options to the districts and their students.

Business Services

Priorities and Goals:

- To provide excellent services both internally and externally to our stakeholders
- Maximize cost effective budget reductions for our districts while restoring the fund balance to 15% of the budget
- Update Board policies as needed to provide guidance and support within the BOCES
- Maintain open communications with the Board, SAC, and staff
- My vision for the Business Services / Administration department would be to help facilitate departmental goals and visions throughout CBOCES, provide support and guidance to enhance each department within the organization, and foster innovative thinking throughout CBOCES to help our districts receive the best value possible
- Preserving and growing partnerships with each member district is critical
- I would look at realigning the Human Resources functions within the CBOCES to provide greater involvement in the employee hiring process and maximize our staff resources to provide the most cost effective and responsive CBOCES possible, while bringing forward ideas and options that will help support our districts for years to come

Financially, CBOCES is struggling to maintain current services, and I envision that as districts struggle with their financial picture the cause and effect will be that CBOCES will struggle with district assessments and grants.

Priorities to find ways to strengthen the bottom line have been slow but encouraging. The BTOP grant that was awarded will definitely help the cash flow with one time dollars when CBOCES can process expenditures against the grant. Currently the equity line (ending fund balance) remains around 1.3 million down from over a year ago of 2.6 million.

Trying to find ways to decrease expenditures, offer the current level of services, and explore ways to assist districts continue to move forward. This department is still trying to overcome the situation of CBOCES over expending and the lack of appropriate time notification to the Board regarding this matter. Earning back trust and confidence will take time as some districts continue to be skeptical regarding the reliability and credibility of the department and associated personnel.

The state financial crisis has created new paradigms for districts and CBOCES. It is not the same organization it was 10 years or even 20 years ago and has been transforming from a cooperative to more of a vendor organization. The cooperative spirit in which it was built is still evident, but I have observed that during a time of limited resources, a new service mindset will be needed from the major departments.

The life stream for future survival will be a strong financial cash flow to make CBOCES resilient to the changing forces related to the organization. This will be one of the biggest challenges for CBOCES.

Summary

The current structure of Centennial BOCES has served it well, although I believe it will need to make adjustments if the organization is to be of any benefit in the future. Within the internal structure, there is a prevailing attitude among some that CBOCES exists for them and not the idea that CBOCES exists to serve its members. An orientation and overview of customer service within a service industry organization is seen as advantageous. Critical needs will be around leadership stability, financial sovereignty, and increased quality of services.

In order to achieve these critical goals in the next two to three years it is probable that CBOCES will need to be on a continuous improvement plan that may include downsizing the organization, focusing on quality services, and exploring new venues for efficiency.

Future Direction

Facilities:

I recommend that CBOCES move out of the Longmont facility The Saint Vrain Valley School District owns 52% of the building and could buy out the rest of the physical asset from other Districts. Estes Park is the only other active member who has interest in the Longmont facility. I have had numerous conversations with the Chief Operations Officer of the Saint Vrain School District and they are very interested in this opportunity. Both districts will need to communicate on an agreement related to the appraisal cost of the building.

All departments should be headquartered in the Greeley location and continue to work in union with the Fort Morgan site. This move will save the CBOCES approximately 35k-45k annually in utility costs alone. Additional savings would be realized in the areas of building maintenance and repairs, janitorial services and mileage costs between the Longmont and Greeley offices just to name a few. The only problems I can perceive would be related to the logistics of moving equipment and selling surplus from combining both offices into one.

A plan will be developed for the transition from Longmont to Greeley. I suggest the move begin in April and be completed no later than June. Planning for cultural adaptations and accommodations will need to have a professional development component for acculturation of bringing both sites together.

Technology:

The CBOCES Technology department would need to be phased out over a year's time from the Longmont facility to the Greeley facility.

With the advent of Eagle Net, the major services within technology will be with IFAS support, Infinite Campus, some IT support for districts and internal support for CBOCES staff. The Technology Department could outsource to consultants and utilize Eagle Net staff to reduce costs in the IFAS area. CBOCES would keep the Infinite Campus student data system and reduce down to a few IT specialists.

This department could be reduced to minimum staff, saving CBOCES over 300k per year and eliminating the need for an assistant director. The assistant director and some technicians will be eliminated.

The Internet 2 connections would be moved over to Eagle Net. CBOCES will be able to claim round two costs for the BTOP grant and other possible funding expenditures that were utilized by CBOCES to work toward grant attainment.

Administrative:

The CBOCES Board of Directors will have options to review and investigate future leadership for the organization. Currently, the structure of having an Executive Director and three other directors has been the mode of operation for quite sometime. In observing the current work load, I will provide the following options for the Board to review. I believe there are more cost effective alternatives.

Option A: Do a national search for an Executive Director with an announcement of vacancy by early February, post for a month, screen applicants, interview and make selection by April. CBOCES could conduct its own search or employ a search firm. Salary compensation and benefits would be a critical discussion for the position. There could be a potential savings of 20k-30k in this area relevant to salary and benefits.

Option B: Investigate the possibility of interviewing current Directors who are interested in a combined position of being an Executive Director and their position responsibilities. The decision to explore this opportunity could be twofold. First, consider an interim basis to see if the concept is feasible and would work long term. Second, the organization could move forward to have an internal interview process for anyone interested and possibly downsize an administrative position. The savings of this option could be over 100k-125k and would reduce administrative costs. If combining a Program Director position with an Executive Director position is decided upon, a salary increase would be justified. I also recommend that the Learning Services Department be made an independent department and funding taken out of migrant and federal programs.

Option C: Look at re-inventing the Executive Director position to be a shared responsibility with a Superintendent from a member district or other educational agency that might be interested. A school district may be willing to share its leadership with the CBOCES by splitting salaries and creating a job share opportunity. Legal parameters would need to be worked out for supervision and evaluation. This position could be placed on a rotation with any participating district and other Superintendents could consult and also be compensated. This would create a potential savings of 60k -65k in administrative costs in addition to providing stability from the SAC group in day-to-day activities.

Option D: The Executive Director position could be a part time position for 2-3 days a week. A retired Superintendent, BOCES executive, or other administrative retiree maybe an optimal option for the future until the organizations regains balance financially. PERA considerations should be factored in, and a reduced salary could be offered with a 60k-75k savings in salary and reduced administrative costs.

Option E: An extreme option would be to retain only Special Education and Migrant programs, find a district that would oversee those two programs, and have the CBOCES Board become an ad hoc Board to advise and make recommendations to the oversight district. Morgan County could become its own BOCES again with shared leadership from the four districts there. Weld County would be overseen by one of the Weld County School Districts. This option would include eliminating at least two administrative positions for a savings of over 200k.

Option F: Fold CBOCES into another recognized BOCES. Let that educational organization take the lead over services to districts. Possibly eliminating an Executive Director position for a savings of salary and benefits as well as a cost savings shared over more districts of a mega BOCES. The savings could be in the area of 60k to 65k as reduced cost to member districts. Assessments are spread out over a larger number of districts.

The future course of CBOCES will reside in the decision that the Board will soon make. There will be other considerations necessary regarding financial recovery for the CBOCES as well as the department priorities and goals. A healthy discussion will need to take place soon as we begin to determine the navigational components for future success. All suggestions are presented as ideas and each one will need more detailed planning for implementation. The decision, of course, rests with the Board.

Respectfully Submitted,



Dr. Randy Zila
Executive Director

5.0 FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The question was raised, what is the Board's desire regarding CBOCES continuing to provide a meal prior to the Board Meetings?

Mr. Dudley offered up options of having only snacks and drinks for a lesser cost of approximately \$30 or \$40. Dr. Jo Barbie, Superintendent of Weld RE-1 added that their district no longer serves a meal at work sessions. Mr. Bob Peterson, Superintendent of Weldon Valley RE-20J, said he thought it would be a good idea to bring this matter back as an Agenda Item at the February Board Meeting; people traveling a farther distance do appreciate the opportunity for a meal prior to the meeting.

CBOCES providing food, with options to choose from, will be presented and discussed at the February 17, 2011 meeting.

There being no further business, Mr. John Dudley adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Melony Sandquist
Executive Administrative Assistant
Centennial BOCES