

**RIO COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
AREA-WIDE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
Wednesday, February 22, 2017 - 6:30 PM
Rio Middle/High School Commons**

The meeting was called to order at 6:40 PM by Alice Marquardt, Rio Board of Education President. Alice Marquardt thanked everyone present for accepting the invitation to continue exploring ideas on joining services for the betterment of each school district. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Bob Hagenow, Rio Board's Vice President. This meeting was properly posted in the districts.

There were five districts represented, including the Fall River School District, the Cambria-Friesland School District, Rio Community School District, Randolph School District, and the Pardeeville School District. There were 22 Board members, principals, and superintendents present and seven visitors, for a total of 29 people.

Common Calendar. Discussion was had between the Boards and the Superintendents regarding the completion of a common calendar. Fall River was the first district to complete their calendar, and all the other school districts have agreed to it.

Master Schedule - Update. The Boards and Superintendents are continuing work on their master schedules. The group is doing their best to align their start times. Mr. Knitt, Pardeeville's Superintendent, suggested that we have a discussion with the WIAA regarding the start times for the sports seasons before completing the master schedule.

Course Handbook - Update. The course handbook was shared between districts and agreed upon by all.

Shared Services. The Boards are looking at the cost-saving options of sharing certain services, such as, copy machines and services, speakers and presenters, and staffing needs. Fall River has done some background work on the logistics of sharing the copy machine and services contract, and has received pricing from three different vendors. There was positive feedback regarding the idea of sharing speakers and presenters. It was felt that if we brought the schools together for student presentations and staff for professional development, we could host better speakers at a lower cost. There was thought this would be a great opportunity for the staff to network and share ideas. Next, the Boards discussed the sharing of staff. It was felt that we could attract better applicants if we were to offer full-time positions that would be shared between districts versus separate part-time positions at each district. There was discussion regarding the districts' contract with CESA 5 and what would be a better cost-saving option.

Other Opportunities. It was during this time that the group shared opportunities for different grants. The question was raised if the districts would have a better chance of receiving a grant if they were to apply together.

Pardeeville/Cambria-Friesland Presentation at State Convention. Pardeeville Superintendent, Mr. Knitt, and Cambria-Friesland Superintendent, Mr. Raymond, shared with the group about the presentation that they made at the State Convention. They discussed how their schools are working towards gearing their tech ed curriculum toward local hiring needs. They stressed the importance of doing this due to the limited industries in our areas. They also shared the importance of growing awareness to retain future families.

Discussion - Career/Business/School District/Local Government/Post-Secondary.

Regional Opportunities. Pardeeville has implemented a program called *reality days*. This is an opportunity given to high school students to pick a lifestyle (career, family, education) at random, and then make plans on how they can make that work best for them. A joint career fair was also discussed as a possible future activity.

New Conference. Currently there are 24 schools in the Trailways Conference, making it the largest in the state. Because of this, our schools have very lengthy driving times, causing the students to not return to school until late. The Boards feel that having such a large conference has also caused the schools to lose their rivalries. There will be continued discussion concerning the current Trailways Conference or developing a new conference.

Transportation. Tim Smith, of Smith Bus Company, was present and shared with the Boards that he was looking forward to the opportunity to work with them. Although some of the districts are not interested in sharing bussing each school day, they are interested in the possibility of sharing busses for special events such as field trips.

Future Meetings. A third meeting will be scheduled at a later date.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:21 p.m.