

Throughout my first two and a half years as superintendent, our school board, administrative team and staff have worked diligently to create and put in place the 127 initiatives listed below. This enabled us to streamline our district financial and academic operations to ensure that the taxpayers' money is being utilized wisely while still providing the best possible educational and extracurricular experience for our students. We have also been able to maintain our current level of taxation, which has not increased in nine years.

The 127 initiatives completed during the past two and a half years include:

- the implementation of a School Security Program employing off duty police officers in each of the district's school buildings during the AM and PM hours of operation, 180 days of the school year
- 28 policies/programs were changed and/or implemented
- 37 programs/program structures were implemented and established
- 15 job descriptions were revised
- 10 new money saving initiatives were added and implemented
- 26 positive changes in the district's Special Education program were initiated to ensure compliance with all state and federal requirements
- we continued work with and expanded the efforts of Tide Task Force with five projects
- continued the upgrading of all technology with technological infrastructure updating and continuation of an iPad initiative
- we implemented the new student information system with trainings for all personnel.

Details on these 127 initiatives are included throughout this document.

The three characteristics school board members and school administrators must demonstrate are: responsibility, personal involvement and having a comprehensive plan for the future of the district.

Responsibility and personal involvement mean school board members and administrators need to be involved with both the school and local community; they need to be aware of what is happening in the school and involved in the education and curriculum development process. Planning ahead means having a comprehensive plan for the educational and fiscal future of the district. Our school board meets each of these needs while also sharing their life experience from having worked full time in various professional positions ranging from doctors and lawyers to managerial positions and school administration. Each is also actively involved in the community.

From my perspective, as an educator for the past 25 years, I believe that an administrator should not sit in an office day after day.

I believe the job is to be in every school on a weekly basis, talking to students and faculty.

I believe the job is to attend as many sporting and extracurricular events as possible, meeting and talking to parents.

I believe the job is to meet regularly with members of the business community to discuss their needs and their interest in the district. I do this so I understand how our administrative decisions affect both the school and local community.

I believe the job is to implement our district's comprehensive plan for the future of the Pottsville Area School District.

**28 policies/programs were changed and/or implemented:**

**A. Revised the following policies/procedures:**

- **Student Records**
- **Student Discipline**
- **Weapons**
- **Terroristic Threats**
- **Tobacco Use: No. 222 Tobacco Use (Pupils)**
  - No. 323 Tobacco Use (Administrative Employees)**
  - No. 423 Tobacco Use (Professional Employees)**
  - No. 523 Tobacco Use (Support Employees)**
  - No. 904 Tobacco Use (Community)**
- **Faculty handbook revised and placed online**
- **Booster Clubs**
- **Service Animals**
- **Progressive Discipline**
- **Employee Dismissals**
- **Return to Work -Workers Compensation**
- **Sudden Cardiac Arrest**
- **Concussion Management**
- **Family Medical Leave Act**
- **Records Management & Retention**
- **Use of Force**
- **YouTube**
- **Surveys of students**
- **Audio/Video Recording on Buses**
- **Behavior Support Intervention**
- **Student Electronic Communication Device**
- **Social Media**
- **Electronic Records**
- **Screening of Employees**

**B. Implemented and established 38 programs/structures:**

- **Restructured administrative team.**
- **Restructured special education in the district.**
- **Established open communication with the board via Friday voicemails, emails, etc.**
- **Hired new business manager to reorganize the responsibilities of that position.**
- **Established a continuing relationship with the Crimson Tide Foundation.**
- **Established a district Ebay account to sell surplus items; in 2012-2013 \$14,327.46 was collected.**
- **Established a process to sell out of date computer equipment; in 2012-2013 \$20,750.00 was collected. The total sales amounted to \$35,077.46.**
- **iPads were assigned to each school board member to help to decrease the number of paper copies given out at board meetings.**

- Skype was introduced as a means for any board member who had to miss a meeting to be able to participate. The first Skype took place on June 13, 2012 for the work session by Dr. Zwiebel.
- School Reach instant messaging system was introduced as a means to contact parents regarding school emergencies, weather delays or cancellations and special district events. Parents had the options to be contacted through phone, email or texting.
- Mandated Reporter Training was held for each employee of the district.
- Skyward, Inc. was chosen as the district's new Student Information System solution. Skylert became the district's new instant messaging system.
- School Wires helped to construct the district's new website and intranet solution.
- Continued cooperative efforts with the Pottsville Police; they responded immediately to our calls; had the drug dogs search through the schools and no drugs were discovered in the search.
- Organizational Chart
- Non Discrimination
- Extra-curricular activities
- Interscholastic Athletics
- Controlled Substances
- Drug and Substance Abuse
- Overtime
- Tax Levy
- Investment of District Funds
- Purchases Subject to Bid
- Safety
- Emergency Preparedness
- Relations with Law Enforcement
- Contracted Services
- AED
- School Visitors
- Municipal Government
- Field Trips
- Non School Organizations
- Evaluation of Administrative Employees
- Donations
- Use of Asthma Inhalers & Epi-pens
- Use of Medications
- Food Service

**C. Revised 15 job descriptions:**

- I.S.S. Monitor
- Administrative Assistant to High School Principal
- Access Coordinator
- Receptionist
- Special Education Secretary

- **Accounts Receivable Manager**
  - **Business Office Specialist**
  - **Food Service Department Secretary**
  - **Assistant Payroll Manager**
  - **Attendance Office Secretary**
  - **Assistant Director of Attendance**
  - **Computer Technician**
  - **Business Office Specialist**
  - **Accounts Payable Manager**
  - **Transportation Supervisor**
- D. Implemented and added 10 new money saving initiatives:**
- **The “Employee Portal,” an automated system allowing employees to request absences electronically and view/print pay stubs eliminating the need to print and deliver pay stubs to all employees.**
  - **Implemented an automated general supply process for staff through a national cooperative purchasing agreement with Office Depot.**
  - **Established a self funding arrangement for district employee health care coverage through the Multi County Consortium.**
  - **Implemented use of a third party shipping service –“Educational Shippers Association.”**
  - **Established a district “Amazon” account for staff purchases.**
  - **Implemented a testing module for prospective secretarial staff employees.**
  - **Implemented an online “Use of Facility” application.**
  - **Established a disadvantaged student fund through the generosity of Edith Laub.**
  - **Established an investment portfolio with Valley Forge Financial Management in conjunction with Susquehanna Bank.**
  - **Added an alternative health care plan – “Consumer Driven Health Care Plan.”**
- E. Initiated 24 positive changes in Special Education in the district to meet state and federal requirements:**
- **Hired Andrew M. Klein, Independent Special Education Consultant, and implemented his suggestions.**
  - **Developed a “to do” list for the current school year and beyond.**
  - **Finalized and implemented position guides for the three Directors and paraprofessionals.**
  - **Met with the Transportation Department to align Special Education and Section 504 requirements with current procedures and processes internally.**
  - **Defined the roles and expectations for the school psychologists.**
  - **Ms. Brennan became the senior director with the other administrators reporting to her.**

- **Because of increasing expectations and responsibilities under IDEA and Section 504, especially at the secondary levels, initiated plan to increase the number of school psychologists.**
- **Began an in-depth look at the need for continuum of service for our more needy learners and how to deliver curriculum instructionally for our more severe students with Specific Learning Disabilities.**
- **Developing in service training so our teachers can learn how to differentiate instruction using Universal Designs for Learning. This training will help solve learning problems such as the ability to acquire and retain instruction.**
- **Continue to train educators to utilize Aims Web, a special education, state-of-the-art progress-monitoring tool.**
- **Continue with the training and implementation of our Section 504 Service Agreements.**
- **The addition of Mrs. Deneen Reese (JSC Supervisor) and Mrs. Elly Sanayka (PAHS Supervisor) during the summer of 2013 significantly upgraded the stature and status of the Department for the better. Their efforts for our students paid tremendous educational dividends throughout the 2013-2014 school year.**
- **Mr. Klein held monthly meetings with the Directors for 2.5-3 hour sessions with formal agendas. These covered topics raised by them, by Dr. Zwiebel, by Mr. Klein and issues developing within the Commonwealth as to procedures. Most importantly student concerns dominated the time allotted.**
- **A highly successful PDE Program Audit was completed. The Final Report contained only minor individual findings in certain files but no systemic, endemic issues requiring wholesale modifications were found.**
- **Final Procedural Manuals under the IDEA and Section 504 were produced.**
- **The addition of the 3<sup>rd</sup> full-time psychologist and 2<sup>nd</sup> full-time school social worker bodes very well for the district in its ongoing efforts to support our students.**
- **Retaining the model of three special education administrators, one at each building, has been successful beyond words for all involved parties and constituents.**
- **The RTII efforts in the Elementary School and beginning now to extend to the Middle School are major steps in the right direction to head off early and spurious referrals to special education.**

- **The training afforded to the staff in the behavioral realms by Dr. Vince Winterling was a substantial step in the right direction in this critical area of educational performance.**
- **Improvements in the Section 504/ADA process over the entire 2013-2014 school year demonstrate the commitment to our less-needy children in our facilities.**
- **The Administrative Duties of the Administrators was revised to capitalize on their respective strengths and interests.**
- **The Autism Support Project at the Elementary School was and is a resounding success for those two classes of pupils.**
- **The expansion of the Read 180 program into the High School for the 2014-2015 school year speaks volumes to the recognized needs of our adolescents in this most critical academic area.**
- **We continue to review carefully on an annual basis the addition, deletion or modification of our current array of classrooms so as to remain in compliance with legal defensibility.**

**We have met with the Principals and faculties to elicit their thoughts and opinions as to how we can strengthen the Department in the near and moderate term. These valuable inputs will allow the administrators to forge ahead with a clearer sense of the end points and be responsive.**

- F. Continued work with and expansion of Tide Task Force with 6 projects:**
- **The Tide Task Force works closely with Teens Against Tobacco, Schuylkill County Drug & Alcohol and the City of Pottsville.**
  - **Sponsored a Town Hall Meeting with Tim Rader, a Schuylkill County native, and a former addict on the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse. Pottsville Police and the Schuylkill County District Attorney participated in the meeting, which was open to the public.**
  - **Hosted the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Tide Pride BBQ for students in grades 7-12 at Barefield.**
  - **Helps to coordinate Red Ribbon Week in each school every October.**
  - **Was recognized for the Young Lungs At Play initiative, in which signs were posted at all city playgrounds banning smoking.**
  - **Received a \$1,000 grant from Communities in Schools of PA to report positive messages from the recent PAYS survey.**

- G. Technology Report: Continued the upgrading of all technology with technological infrastructure updating; iPad initiative, implementation of Skyward, the new student information system with trainings for all personnel.**
- **13-14 Inventory**  
Elementary Center - 218 Desktops – 570 iPads  
Middle School – 298 Desktops – 160 Laptops - 125 iPads & Kindles  
High School – 437 Desktops – 160 iPads
  - **Infrastructure Update**  
The infrastructure is key for the successful implementation of the district's 1:1 initiative. All instructional areas within the district are projected to have wireless access by the end of the 2016-2017 school year. The upper level of the John S. Clarke Elementary was completed and is now equipped with 27 access points to accommodate the iPads in Kindergarten, First and Second grades.
  - **1:1 iPad Initiative**  
Phase 1 of the district's 1:1 initiative is complete. 540 iPad minis were distributed to all Kindergarten and First Grade teachers and students. Those 18 classrooms were also equipped with Apple TVs, which allow both teachers and students to display their own iPad screen onto the Smartboards. Phase two has begun with the distribution of iPads to all second and fifth graders.
  - **Professional Development**  
Numerous Skyward trainings were held throughout the school year for faculty and staff which included gradebook, lesson plans, attendance, scheduling, special education, health, discipline, food services, graduation requirements, transcripts and state reporting. iPad sessions were held for Kindergarten and First Grade teachers. Resources are also available on the district's intranet and a shared Resource folder on the network.
  - **Skyward**  
The new student information system implemented for the 13-14 year went very well, reporting capabilities are much more robust than the previous system.
  - **Next Steps**  
Phase 2 planning for the 1:1 iPad initiative, which includes equipment, as well as curriculum and infrastructure.