

<i>Group</i>	<b>Virtual Education Advisory Council</b>	<i>Date / Location</i> <b>KSDE Board Room &amp; Virtual Locations</b>	<b>Mon, 11/2/09 9:30 am – 11:30 am</b>
<i>Facilitator</i> <i>Chair</i> <i>Vice-Chair</i>	Cherie Nicholson Mike Mathes Mike Bodensteiner	<i>Recorder</i>	Pat Scrivner

<b>KSDE Mission</b>	<b>Leadership and Support for Student Learning</b>
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- Objectives*
1. Redesign the delivery system to meet our students' changing needs
  2. Provide an effective educator in every classroom
  3. Ensure a visionary and effective leader in every school
  4. Improve communication with all constituent groups and policy partners

*Members - (present at meeting X, absent at meeting left blank)*

	Matt Berens	X	Duane Dorshorst		Mike Mathes	X	Elizabeth Ann Sanders
X	Mike Bodensteiner	X	Marla Elmquist	X	Kim Myers	X	Robin Surland
	Dr. Gillian Chapman	X	Dr. Julie Ford		Jan Neufeld	X	Kim White
	Dr. Diane DeBacker	X	Dr. Bart Goering	X	Cherie Nicholson		Tonya Witherspoon
X	Brenda DeGroot (Nicole Williams)	X	Sherri Hurn	X	Sherry Reed	X	Randy Warner
X	David Dennis		Gary Lewis (Jana Lloyd)	X	Colleen Riley		

<b>Agenda Items</b>	<b>Key Points Discussed</b>	<b>Action or follow-up</b>
<b>I. Welcome and Introductions</b>	Welcome by Mike Bodensteiner. Mike Mathes is unavailable today so I will be serving as the chair today.	
<b>II. Approval of Agenda</b>	Bart Goering moved the agenda be approved. Marla Elmquist seconded the motion.  Motion passed.	
<b>III. Approval of Minutes June meeting</b>	Amendment to the minutes at the June meeting Brenda moved this council serve on adhoc basis. It is recommended that we move out of adhoc and meet more consistently.  Motion was made to approve the minutes with the amendment to meet more consistently by Dave Dennis.  Marla Elmquist seconded the motion.  Motion passed.	

**IV. Purpose:  
Special Meeting**

Mike Bodensteiner shared the purpose of the meeting. This meeting has been called in response to a State Board member request. The request was for the “consideration of the development of a virtual school for the state of Kansas. Things to consider in the development are Kansas’ high standards, somewhere for the homeschooled children to go, and shut down virtual schools coming into Kansas with other standards.”

This committee will make a recommendation to the State Board regarding a State Virtual School.

Members were asked to step back and participate by looking at the broader issues involved.

Dr. Julie Ford– Virtual schools came to the TPS team and to Cherie in July after Bill Hagerman left the agency. The request for this meeting came from the State Board Of Education at the October meeting. Issues that were brought up are virtual school development with Kansas high standards, providing somewhere for the homeschooled children to go, and shut down virtual schools coming into Kansas with other standards. Following the State Board meeting Dr. DeBacker asked us to pull this group together and bring information back to the State Board.

Dave Dennis shared that at the board meeting they were asked to approve all the virtual schools. Concerns were: do they all meet Kansas standards, professional development for teachers, monitoring security of assessments, recruiting of students, meeting all QPA requirements. This group needs to be involved in addressing these concerns. I really appreciate you being at this meeting today.

Background information:  
Schools and Programs – 10 Virtual schools, 32 programs within districts or service centers. Schools do follow all requirements of schools. KSDE is currently in the process of visiting all schools and programs as mandated by state law.

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### V. Discussion: Advantages and Challenges of State Virtual School

Let's look at these issues from systems perspective –

#### • What are the advantages of the current system?

- Mike Matthes offered some comments via email – benefits helps suspended students, students with illness, schools who are unable to offer certain classes ie: advanced placement, drop outs can continue education, online learning permits opportunities.
- Sherri Hurn– The current system offers a choice to students/parents as well as variety. Each program is different and may meet the needs of different students.
- Bart – 80% of their students had not been enrolled in the previous semester. State dept. has really beefed up their system with visitations and checking on systems being in place.
- Nicole - We have developed a virtual program in our district that aligns to the high standards we have set in our district. We can share these high standards to students.
- Sherri – current system also promotes creativity and constant change and innovation. Competition is good for that.
- Bart – In August a district lost their Spanish teacher and our school has accepted 27 students to provide the Spanish class for that district.
- Sherry Reed – The current system allows schools to ease into more experience with differentiation and personalized programming. It's a tough sell for some communities so baby steps are good.
- Robin – proctoring requirement with so many sites allows us to help meet each others needs for proctoring etc.
- Ann Sanders – current system allows for competition and may help us in the Race for the top.

#### • Disadvantages of current system in the state

- Nicole – concern that all programs are not following the basic guidelines.
- Bart – quality control is a concern but the State dept is addressing that with the new emphasis during the visits that are now occurring.
- Ann – Quality--ensuring that virtual schools are more than a business enterprise. Changes-- Provide more venues for traditional and virtual school personnel to interact /collaborate.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>If we could make changes to the current system – what could we do that would benefit learning, kids?</b></li> <li>• Marla – lack of understanding about what we are and how we work in virtual education. Some of the question we receive is because of a lack of understanding of what it is and how we work. Scrutinized more than brick and mortar schools. Lots of checks and balances in the virtual charter system.</li> <li>• Sherry H. – If one school doesn't follow the rules all look bad.</li> <li>• Ann Sanders changes between programs provide more chances for virtual and traditional school personnel to interact.</li> <li>• Dave Dennis – what kind of Professional Development plan do we receive from these schools? How do we ensure that we are not double paying for these kids? When we have students enrolled and pay for them on Sept 20, how many drop outs do we have?</li> <li>• Cherie N. All schools are required to have a school improvement plan. Schools must follow all the guidelines included in QPA. Programs are monitored by the district they are a part of. If districts are not meeting requirements, KSDE would be monitoring them more closely at that time.</li> <li>• All staff are highly qualified and certified.</li> <li>• Julie –auditors monitor all schools for the number of students for which they are being given funding.</li> </ul>	
	<p>Dave – Do we have staff development plans? Can we get drop out information by next board meeting?</p> <p>Yes, for schools.</p> <p>Dave Dennis -Need information on program completion.</p> <p>Programs are used within districts to do their credit recovery. Attrition rate is higher than we would like because these students have already dropped out of traditional schools and require a lot of follow up and support to stay active and involved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marla – dropout rate does not show that we work hard to get the student placed in the right school whether it is a GED program or back into the traditional school. We have a waiting list for our programs so when one leaves, another comes in, so this does not show up.</li> </ul> <p>KIDS system takes care of the issue of double paying.</p>	<p><b>Research needed:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Drop out information</b></li> <li>• <b>Program completion</b></li> </ul>

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- Why are we not just dealing with problem programs instead of looking at a state school?
- Are virtual schools a part of NCA/QPA/QAR? Are Virtual Schools' scores listed /made public like traditional schools? Yes, for the schools
- Many students are former drop outs. If they drop out again, are they counted again? Only counted once per year in the fall.
- We find that when we have a drop from BLVS it is not always a negative...if they return to their local district that is a positive.
- Program students are counted with the building they are located in.
- We are also dealing with alternative students often, so the outcome with them is not necessarily what we want. But, we have offered another option, another opportunity for them to be successful.
- Many of our students are only part time and are only paid as part time. Monitored by auditing team.
- Where would one find the performance/scores of the 10 Virtual Schools? You should be able to find a report card on the schools as you do for any other school.
- This is difficult because conducting an analysis of one program or school may not say anything about another that operates differently.
- The state run option : What was the reason (s) that Fla. abandoned its state run programs? Has KSDE evaluated the Fla. model?
- Can we review the guidelines...address areas of concerns...make changes as necessary depending on the specific concerns?
- Another question would be what the advantages to having a state run school would be. Would that system take care of the current problems/disadvantages of the current system or would we just be trading one system for another w/o any real advancement?
- It seems to me that the advantages are more evident than that of disadvantages. I feel we need to let the process work before we change.

**If the state of Kansas were to study the current system and recommend a state school or series of state schools what are the possibilities?**

Cross and Joftus will be monitoring and conducting a visit on a Virtual school this year that is on improvement. This will provide KSDE with lots of new information.

On the possibility of a State run school, homeschool families probably are a little more leery of a state run school than a local school.

Standards for teachers – SREB has created a set of guidelines for Professional development for virtual teachers. Good starting point. Emailed to Pat

One of the advantages of the system we have now is that it is decentralized.

Dave -Board is not looking at an either or situation. We are just looking to be sure we are doing the right things for kids.

Bart – Perhaps a virtual school could do a session with the state board so that the board could get a true feel for how a virtual student receives information and instruction. Might help the overall understanding. Experiencing the system is really a learning experience.

Marla – that is a great idea. As a virtual school we feel that we are scrutinized a lot...We want feedback to be sure we are meeting the needs of our students. Consequences should be there for schools not meeting the guidelines. We do an excellent job of providing professional development. We do more training for our virtual teachers than our traditional schools receive.

Julie -Perhaps Cherie N could share the process with the State Board at the December meeting so they are more aware of what we are already doing.

Dave – The State Board needs some recommendations at the time you come before the board.

**If we are to provide some very specific information to the state board- Where do we go from here? Open to specific recommendations.**

Could we be more specific with what we need to recommend?

Cherie restated the Board question – do we recommend continuing the current system or do we make changes to the system?

Dave Dennis – need to be sure that everyone on this council has a voice and speaks as one voice with a lot of information.

**Do we have all the information we need to make a recommendation?**

Florida model has been mentioned, do we need more information from other places before moving forward?

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	<p>Should we wait until this next round of monitoring is complete? This may provide the data on what the state department is collecting.</p> <p>Only 8 programs have been visited at this time. These visits are providing valuable information.</p> <p>Bart – I think this data will be important.</p>	
<p><b>VI. Recommendations</b></p>	<p>Motion – Bart Goering I move we collect information from the KSDE virtual visits Cherie is conducting which will include specific data on the schools and programs including student performance, dropout rates, etc. In addition, the council will begin researching information on other state models which will be discussed and interpreted prior to the council sending a recommendation to the State Board in April.</p> <p>Marla Elmquist – Seconded the motion.</p> <p>Discussion Cherie N. -Timeline: Virtual School visits must be finished by April according to approved guidelines. Is May too late with visits and acquiring information from other states?</p> <p>Is there a value to committee members looking at other state's information? Great idea. KSDE would appreciate the help in looking up information.</p> <p>Motion passed.</p>	<p><b>Dave Dennis will report to the State Board the timeline for response from this council.</b></p> <p><b>Volunteers:</b></p> <p><b>Ann Sanders, Sherri Hurn, Robin Surland, Marla Elmquist, and Sherry Reed to help collect data.</b></p>
<p><b>VII. Other</b></p>	<p>Announcement of Regular Meeting: Next meeting – December 17, 2009 9:00 – 11:00</p> <p>Virtual Education Advisory Council Bylaws will be coming at this meeting. They will be sent to you as draft for response.</p> <p>Election of Chair and Vice-chair will occur at the next meeting.</p> <p>Future dates will be set.</p>	
	<p>Thanks so much for all of your input today.</p>	

		<b>Next Meeting</b>	
		<i>Date / Time:</i>	<b>December 17, 2009 9:00-11:00</b>
		<i>Location:</i>	<b>Various Locations</b>