Maximizing Efforts for Delivery of First Class Education

Virtual Education in SD

- South Dakota Virtual School

https://sdvs.k12.sd.us/

  – Clearinghouse of distance courses offered by approved providers

  – All courses approved prior to offering

  – Offers a complete high school curriculum in addition to middle and elementary courses

Enrolling in the SDVS

- Student enrollments
  - Must enroll through local district
  - School districts may deny request to take virtual course
  - Home school students may register if they enroll with local school district

Courses Offered

- Course delivery
  - Synchronous (video based)
  - Asynchronous (online web based)
  - Both
- Course types
  - Credit recovery
  - Advanced placement
  - Dual credit
  - Regular high school credit

E-Learning (Northern)

- Offered at no cost to the district/student
  - 24 courses to include advanced placement
  - 16 teachers
  - Priority to sparse districts followed by first come/first serve
  - Mission to meet the needs of districts unable to provide courses necessary for SD Opportunities Scholarship

Dual Credit

- Successful completion of course results in credit for high school and post-secondary
  - Students are responsible for the $40 per-credit cost and any required textbooks or related course materials.
  - Reduced tuition available only to students in 11-12 grade
- Courses offered on campus or online

College Readiness

- Offered online for purposes of eliminating the need for remediation in post-secondary
  - Initial costs ($125-$175) incurred by district or student
  - Costs are reimbursed for up to three courses if the student completes the coursework

Other Providers

- Primarily online (anytime courses)
- Costs incurred by students
  - Courses average $250-$300
  - Include the full range of a high school curriculum

Discussion

- How can we promote distance education as an opportunity to deliver benchmark education to all SD kids?

- What could we do to develop a cadre of expert teachers to deliver virtual education?

- How could access to courses be expanded?

- How could virtual education help address teacher recruitment?

Recruitment and Retention

- Recruitment has been and will remain an issue in many of our hard to staff geographic issues

- Throughout the data gathering there was an ongoing theme of the need for support (mentoring) of teachers

Professional Development Center

- Professional Development Center (PDC) program with USD
  - New teacher
    - Graduate assistants paid through USD
    - Provided stipend of $14,000 while working on graduate degree in the school district
    - Opportunities for peer/mentor/other teacher observation
- Experienced teacher
  - 2/3 reduction in in-state tuition towards advanced degree
  - Receive regular salary from the district while mentoring new teachers

WoLakota Mentoring

- Small pilot between DOE and Technology and Innovations in Education (TIE)
  - New teachers in rural or high-needs schools linked with mentors in online environment
  - Mentors visit classroom throughout year
  - Mentees participate with mentors in four weekend retreats
  - Results in 15 face-to-face meetings
- Success story: http://www.couragerenewal.org/wolakota-renewed-courage-for-a-teacher/

Differentiated Pay

- Tiered licensure
  - **Creates** progressive levels of preparation and experience, along with continued levels of advancement that help retain educators
  - **Attract** a new generation of educators who see opportunities and incentives for early involvement
  - May be based on advanced degrees, extra duties, etc.
  - May be linked to pay increases

National Board Certification

- Voluntary advanced certification
  - Maintains high standards for what teachers should know and be able to do
  - Recognized nationally as the gold star of excellence in teacher quality
- Current statute specifies reimbursement of application fees and $2000/year for five years for teachers obtaining certification
  - $1000/state and $1000 district
  - State match if districts extend for additional five years
  - Funding cut in 2010
  - http://legis.sd.gov/Statutes/Codified_Laws/DisplayStatute.aspx?Type=Statute&Statute=13-42-26

Other Efforts in Place

- Project Select (BHSU)
  - Recruits second career individuals on a fast-track to become teachers

- Dakota Corps Scholarship
  - Full tuition for students committing to teach in high needs content and remain in SD

- Critical Teaching Needs Scholarship
  - Funds last two years of teacher preparation program and commits students to remaining in SD for five years

Discussion

- What efforts should be expanded or created?

- What efforts should be made to address tiered licensure and/or differentiated pay?

Blue Ribbon Task Force

Efficiency

What can the state do to support and incentivize efficiency of services?

Centralized Services

- One example of efficiency through centralized services is the technology in schools program

- Because South Dakota provides technology services on behalf of schools at a centralized level we are able to recognize many efficiencies which result in significant cost savings to the school districts and ultimately to the taxpayers

Technology In Schools Paid by State vs. Locally

	Est. Cost at State Level	Est. Cost if Done at District Level	Description
BIT Services			
Telecommunications/ Bandwidth	$ 3,992,522	$ 6,433,718	Frame Relay & ATM technologies that connect the schools and comprise the DDN core facilities
Internet Service Provider	$ 389,861	$ 626,172	Connect the DDN to the world
DDN Video Services & Maintenance	$ 224,819	$ 2,168,675	Distance learning support responsibilities for DDN video (Pierre hub)
Network Maintenance and Management	$ 1,551,782	$ 3,098,016	Includes support, upgrades of WAN component, firewalls/filters, IDS Systems, and administration
Total BIT Services Costs	**$ 6,158,984**	**$ 12,326,581**	
DSU K12 Data Center			
DSU K12 Data Center Services & Maintenance	$ 838,064	$ 11,031,119	E-mail, web hosting, WebCT, DNS services, and training for the schools.
Total DSU K12 Data Center Costs	**$ 838,064**	**$ 11,031,119**	
TOTAL	**$ 6,997,048**	**$ 23,357,700**	

Software Systems

- In addition to these technology services, the state provides software systems for school districts such as a student information system and a teacher evaluation system.

- By providing the student information system at a state level the state was able to procure the Infinite Campus District Edition at a cost of $6 per student.

  - If the system were to be purchased at the district level the cost would be $10 per student plus the district would either need to set up their own servers for hosting the information or pay the vendor for hosting.

- The state has also been able to negotiate a savings when we agreed to purchase a teacher evaluation system at the state level.

Other opportunities

- Sharing teachers
- Sharing non-student contact staff
  - Food service
  - Business managers
  - Special Ed directors
  - Title I
  - Administrators
- Providing services for districts
  - Procurement
  - Assessments, curriculum, on-line programs
  - Teacher training

Discussion

– How could efficiencies be incentivized?

– What organizational structure/s could support efficiencies, ie. ESAs?

– Are there other possibilities for efficiency and/or support to the school districts that the state could provide?