RAPID CITY AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT 51-4
SPECIAL BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

The Rapid City Area School Board of Education held a Special Meeting on Thursday, January 24, 2013 at Western Dakota Technical Institute, 800 Mickelson Drive, Rapid City, SD 57703. President Sheryl Kirkeby called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM with the following board members in attendance: Jim Hansen, Jeff Nelsen, Brian Blenner, Bret Swanson and Matt Stephens. Laura Schad was absent from the meeting. Others in attendance included: Mark Wilson, Dr. Tim Mitchell, Patsy Schmidt, WDT Staff, and other members of the community.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

NELSEN moved and HANSEN seconded to approve the establishment of the agenda as presented and recommended. MOTION CARRIED (6-0)

COMMUNICATIONS AND RECOGNITIONS – President Mark Wilson

President Mark Wilson extended recognition to Donna Hanks for her acceptance to present at the NISOD Conference. The conference is scheduled for May in Austin, Texas.

REPORTS

All of the following reports can be viewed on the WDT website at www.wdt.edu.

President’s Report

President Mark Wilson recognized the progress that Western Dakota Tech has made with the Foundation. It was approved by the Rapid City Board of Education to move the WDT Foundation from the last items of the Board of Education agenda to the first item.

WDT FOUNDATION – Mr. John Carlson

Darla Thompson introduced Mr. John Carlson. Mrs. Thompson noted The WDT Foundation is presently working to create more scholarships to meet the needs of WDT students. Mrs. Thompson also reported on the progress with The Foundation and Western Dakota Tech on the topic of Student Housing.

Mr. Carlson spoke about The Foundation’s strategic plan. The Strategic Plan has clear set goals and priorities. Priority number one incorporates critical needs scholarships, dual enrollment scholarships, and recruiting scholarship. Priority number two is program development. Priority number three is student campus community and the
work toward student housing for WDT. Priority four is communications and marketing which involves WDT Marketing Director Steve Buchholz.

**Strategic Plan – Mr. Steve Buchholz**

Since the approval at the last Board of Education meeting, WDT has a new strategic plan in place. Mr. Buchholz gave examples of the new plan being put into action and cited instances of success.

**ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT – Mr. Brad Henrich**

Mr. Brad Henrich introduced members of his enrollment team to speak to the Board of Education about recent progress made.

Jill Elder, Admissions Coordinator, spoke about the 1099 students enrolled presently and of the 7% increase from last year. This is the third largest enrollment of WDT. WDT has put on recruitments, flight nights, and career fairs.

Bill Christensen, Admissions Specialist, spoke of the goal to represent WDT in Wyoming, South Dakota, Nebraska, and North Dakota. Mr. Christensen stated that he is working to build strong relationships with high school counselors. Mr. Christensen also reviewed the strengths of the institution and the new student placement exam, Accuplacer.

Dustin Baertsch, Admissions Specialist, spoke about his local admission activities which include giving campus tours, the organization of eagle days and flight nights, reaching out to local businesses and organizing the WDT recruitment team.

**NEW/EXPANDED PROGRAMS – Ms. Patsy Schmidt**

Mrs. Schmidt spoke about student success and the demand for new programs at WDT. The process calls WDT management team to research and explore important aspects such as the wage index and the demand of each desired program. After research, Mrs. Schmidt explained that a program proposal is drafted, surveys are conducted and then letters of support for the potential program are collected. The information goes to the State Board of Education, and once approved the project is started with WDT Management Team. Two programs that have been developed and approved for the fall of 2013 are HVAC and Plumbing diploma program.

Future programs that are still in process are a nine-month Precision Machining diploma program. There will also be a Drafting and Machining and a HVAC/Plumbing Associate Program.

By the fall of 2014 WDT hopes to have Construction Technology and Physical Therapist Assistant programs.
Mrs. Schmidt also spoke on the topic of program expansions. Presently WDT’s LPN program will be moving from a diploma to an Associate of Arts degree. Surgical Technology will be moving from diploma to Associate of Arts program. Pharmacy Tech will be adding a degree program, all subject to approval.

The Paramedic Program is in the process of being revamped. Dr. Long, ER physician from Regional Health, has met with Paramedic faculty and students to discuss working directly with the doctor on their ER clinical rotations.

Mrs. Schmidt talked about the progress between Corporate Ed and WDT, providing options for credits for on some classes.

President Mark Wilson congratulated Mrs. Patsy Schmidt about her work to move Corp Ed forward.

FISCAL AFFAIRS – Ms. Heidi Anderson

Mrs. Heidi Anderson spoke about the process for the WDT fiscal 2013-14 budgets and how the budget ties into the strategic plan. Mrs. Anderson shared how WDT now had put into place a better master equipment plan. WDT was able to put new equipment and technology into 10 programs this year.

Mrs. Anderson extended a special thanks to Starla Russell for her hard work on the new scholarship programs.

HUMAN RESOURCES – Ms. Theresa Scharn

Mrs. Scharn spoke about WDT and RCAS working as a team on human resource issues. New employees at WDT include Shelia Hansen, the new Library Services Director and Matt Wiebe, Instructional Support Specialist, who has been hired under the TAA grand focusing on designing and developing online classes for the CAD program. The needs of the IT Department are currently being evaluated. Outside sources are being brought in to assist with the evaluation process prior to the department being restructured. Continual quality training for WDT instructors and staff was discussed. While some historical training continues, fresh new training is being introduced in the form of group mentorship, veteran faculty observations, Professional Learning Communities, and 40-minute workshops.

PROGRAM QUALITY – Ms. Kelly O’Brien

Ms. O’Brien introduced Ann Murano, Donna Hanks, and Bernadette Clemens to discuss program quality.

Donna Hanks, WDT business faculty, spoke about the professional learning communities that have been formed between WDT faculty members. Mrs. Hanks stated
the communities create an environment where professionals and faculty can come together and share leadership ideas, be creative collectively, and support one another.

Ann Murano, WDT business faculty, spoke about the WDT mentoring program. The program is designed as a training program to help and support new faculty. This year there were eight new faculty members who joined the WDT team. Mentors and mentees meet every other week to track progress and help with faculty issues such as MyWDT, Blackboard, advising students, and time management. Mrs. Murano also spoke of future plans to incorporate Monday Morning Mentor into the WDT mentoring program.

Bernadette Clemens, surgical technology faculty, spoke about the rewards of the mentoring program. She spoke of the importance of leaving the field of expertise and learning to transmit that valuable information to students as an instructor.

Kelly O’Brien updated the BOE on performance evaluations, which will be completed by May. She also informed the BOE that course evaluations had come back, and faculty were reflecting on the responses and writing self-evaluations.

Ms. O’Brien also spoke about program quality and Higher Learning Commissions compliance. All 400 courses now are compliant. All programs will have their programs competencies in by the end of spring.

SUPERINTENDENT’S COMMENTS – Dr. Tim Mitchell

Dr. Mitchell spoke of the governance meeting. This allows the leadership of the school board to have an appropriate role and maintain a relationship between BOE and WDT Management team.

Dr. Mitchell offered a review of legislative strategies and house education legislation.

OPEN FORUM

Dennis Gorton, Pennington County Fire Chief, spoke about the WDT Fire Science program. He had concerns about how the Fire Science Program had started and how it grew to a respectable program. He spoke of staff changes and resignations and investments of the Pennington County Fire Department in the program.

Tim Kobas, the fire chief of Rapid Valley Fire Department, spoke of his concerns about changes in the fire science program at WDT.

FUTURE AGENDA

Next quarterly board meeting is Thursday, April 25, 2013 at 5:00 P.M. in Dakota Lecture Hall at Western Dakota Technical Institute.
EXECUTIVE SESSION
HANSEN moved and NELSEN seconded to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel issues at 6:35 P.M. MOTION CARRIED (6 - 0)

Executive Session concluded at 7:15 P.M.

ADJOURNMENT

NELSEN moved and HANSEN seconded to adjourn the January 24, 2013, special Board of Education meeting at 7:15 P.M. MOTION CARRIED (6-0).

Respectfully Submitted,

Mark Wilson, WDT President

ATTEST:

Amber Bestgen, Administrative Assistant

Sheryl Kirkeby, President
Rapid City Board of Education