



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF LEE COUNTY

Curriculum Advisory Committee

September 22, 2005

Meeting Minutes

Committee Members Present: Lori Bronder, Marianne deVargas, Patsy, Howell, Susan Jacobse, Lois Redmond, Alicia Reyes, Charles Spire, John Traube, Ginny Wallace, Rebecca White

Committee Members Absent: Sarina Adeni, Elaine Armani, Connie Dennis, Lisa Torres

Lee County School Personnel Present: Dr. Constance Jones, Dr. Elinor Scricca, Dr. Larry Tihen

Recording Secretary: Sherry Pearsall

Reading/Approval of Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Chairperson, Ginny Wallace.

Minutes of the June meeting were dispensed and reviewed. A motion to approve as recorded was made by John Traube and seconded by Charles Spire. The vote was carried unanimously.

Mrs. Wallace thanked everyone for their cards and well wishes during her rehabilitation.

Board Members' Report

Dr. Scricca welcomed Mrs. Wallace back and thanked Mr. Traube for taking the reigns while Mrs. Wallace was out. Dr. Scricca shared a memo from Dr. Browder reporting on "good news" in public education." Among the positive trends that have gone largely unrecognized are:

- ◇ More children are attending full-day kindergarten
- ◇ In Lee County, 100% of kindergarten students attend a full-day program.
- ◇ Younger students are showing gains in reading achievement.

A copy of the Lee County School District Academic Accomplishments from 1997/98 to 2004/05 was distributed to all members.

Dr. Scricca has spoken to the principals at the two new comprehensive high schools, Ida S. Baker High and South Ft. Myers High, and discussed the possibility of a tour of their new facilities for this committee. Dates were discussed and October 20th and November 3rd were agreed upon. It was suggested that possibly the committee could split and visit each site and report back.

Old Business

New Business

Secondary Reading Program

Dr. Tihen presented on secondary reading programs and shared data on student progress in grades 8-10. A small percent of level one students at the high school made progress. We are above the State level in assessment performance. The work gets harder, the tests more rigorous. This year, in addition to grade 6, grades 7, 8,9,10 and 11th and 12th grade students who have not passed the FCAT are now placed in intensive reading classes. All level one (substantially below) students are now placed in intensive

reading classes using the *Language!* program. All level two (minimally below) students are placed in an intensive reading class using the Readers' Handbook. The Great Source assessments (primarily a vocabulary and comprehension test) are excellent predictors of how our middle school students will perform on the FCAT (within 3-4%). Research shows that low fluency interferes with comprehension. There is also known to be a direct linear relationship between poor reading and students dropping out of school. The *Language* program takes about 50 minutes to introduce. Approximately 40 minutes remain to address individual strategies through small group instruction (within the 90 minute reading block). Teachers will receive seven in-services this year on this program.

A concern was raised regarding the fact that substitute teachers have not been trained in this program and a shortage of *Language* textbooks. Two days of training was held during preschool for classroom teachers. A surplus of these textbooks have been ordered, there should not be a shortage of textbooks. Dr. Tihen will follow-up to see what can be done to correct this. A job description for long term substitutes will be going to the Board. This group would be identified as priority subs to receive this training. Reading Coaches are a primary resource for support in the schools for the *Language* program. Currently, interviews are being held to hire additional secondary reading coaches. Reading coaches will be coaching content area teachers. Reading strategies must now be included in lesson plans for teachers of content areas. Dr. Tihen feels this is the best product on the market right now for our students. It is recognized that the task of bringing to students to read on grade level, must be spread out and cannot be accomplished in one year. Three years from now will be a reading adoption year. Under the K-12 Comprehensive Reading Plan, each school is required to have a Reading Leadership Team. In Collier County, reading coaches work with all subject area teachers. One month they work with all science teachers, the next month they may work with all math teachers and so on. This may be something we look at here in our District for the future.

Small Learning Communities

Due to the lack of time to cover this agenda item, a recommendation was made to ask Dr. Judi Hughes from Lehigh Senior High to attend next month's meeting and present on their program. John Traube asked that this be the main item on our agenda next month.

Good of the Order

Future Meeting Dates – January to June 2006

This committee is possibly being reconfigured in January. It was agreed that at this time, tentatively, meetings will continue to be held the fourth Thursday of each month.

Quarterly Committee Report to the Board – September 29th

Items that will be included in this report are:

- ◇ Upcoming tour of the comprehensive high schools
- ◇ Inquiry into the small learning communities
- ◇ Formative assessments – recommended by this committee initially and is now taking place

Mr. Charles Spire will present this report in Mrs. Wallace's absence.

Public Comment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:34 p.m. The next meeting of the Curriculum Advisory Committee is scheduled for: **Thursday, October 27, 2005, at 6:00 p.m. in the Superintendent's Conference Room on the third floor of the Dr. James A. Adams Public Education Center, 2055 Central Ave., Ft. Myers, FL.**

Respectfully submitted, Sherry Pearsall