



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF LEE COUNTY

Curriculum Advisory Committee

November 3, 2005

Meeting Minutes

Committee Members Present: Elaine Armani, Marianne De Vargas, Patricia Howell, Lois Redmond, Alicia Reyes, Charles Spire, John Traube, Virginia Wallace, Rebecca White

Committee Members Absent: Sarina Adeni, Lori Bronder, Connie Dennis, Susan Jacobse, Lisa Torres

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

Recording Secretary: Sherry Pearsall

Reading/Approval of Minutes

Tonight's meeting was held at South Ft. Myers High School. Members took part in a tour of this new comprehensive high school directed by Ms. Kim Verblaauw, Assistant Principal. Following the tour, members convened to the media center where the meeting was called to order by Chairperson, Ginny Wallace. Minutes from the September meeting were dispensed and reviewed. A motion to accept the minutes was made by John Traube, and seconded by Marianne De Vargas. The vote was carried unanimously.

Board Members' Report

Dr. Scricca informed this committee that Hurricane Wilma has caused \$5.5 million in damage. The question of how many make-up days will need to be made up is being looked into. Governor Bush will be notifying Districts soon, if days will be "forgiven". The Lee County School District has received the Gold Seal from OPPAGA. What this means, is that we are handling taxpayers' money effectively and efficiently. The 3rd annual Pride and Patriotism event will be taking place next week, November 10th. Local veterans are being honored. Local high school bands will be performing and student art will be on display. Please call Dr. Scricca if you are interested in attending, for tickets.

Mr. Joe Vetter, Principal at Ida S. Baker High School, has invited committee members to also tour his comprehensive high school facility in the west zone. Mrs. Wallace will make arrangements with Mr. Vetter to hold the December meeting at his school.

Dr. Scricca stated to members that December will be her last meeting as Board liaison to this committee. Beginning in January, Mr. Robert Chilmonik, will be our new Board liaison. Mr. Chilmonik will be invited to attend the December meeting.

John Traube motioned that a letter of appreciation be drafted to Mr. Tommy O'Connell and Ms. Kimberly Verblaauw, thanking them for tonight's tour and hospitality. Charles Spire seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously. Mrs. Wallace will take care of drafting this letter.

Old Business

New Business

Freshmen Academy at Lehigh Senior High School

Dr. Connie Jones introduced Dr. Judi Hughes and Mr. Brian Botts, Assistant Principals at Lehigh Senior High, to present on the Freshmen Academy currently taking place. The Freshmen Academy is a new concept. Curriculum is being directed by the data being collected. All data shows that freshmen struggle to fit in universally. A handout listing the three beliefs that LSHS live by was distributed. National and local data show more kids drop out in the 9th grade year than any other time; they miss more school, have the lowest attendance, highest referral rates, and biggest drop in GPA.

At LSHS freshmen have their own building and do not have to interact with older students. By creating this safe environment, students are placed on teams. They have their own teachers, their own sports teams, and their own lunch period. Attendance is up, referrals and absences are down. Students are in an environment that allows them to be successful. One of the actions underway is improving reading skills by aggressively gathering data and creating leveled instruction. As a result, staff and administration know in depth about their students. Every freshman takes reading. An entire remediation curriculum has been written. LSHS students made more gains than any other school in the county. A scripted path is in place for teachers at LSHS. They have been asked to initiate an arts program in the near future also at LSHS. This is the beginning of a legacy at Lehigh Senior High that provides a focused and aggressive approach to education.

John Traube suggested looking again at the models that housed students in grades 1-5, 6-8, and 9-12. Dr. Tihen noted that the models having the most success were schools containing grades K-8 and grades 9-12.

Cum Laude Recognition Program

Dr. Jones introduced Katherine Banner, Assistant Principal for Curriculum, at Ft. Myers High School. A committee formed and developed revisions to the cum laude recognition program. The cum laude recognition system is simply an internal way of recognizing students' achievements at graduation. It does not go on transcripts. This year's 9th graders will be affected as seniors. Groundwork has been laid to monitor grade point averages and ranking. The goal is to recognize more students. Seven years ago, Ft. Myers High adopted a cum laude system for IB students. This was done to eliminate extreme competition among students. A handout was shared detailing student ranking. Originally, this was recommended to be based on 15 core college credits for Bright Futures. At a principal meeting, Dr. Browder suggested basing this on 24 credits to include more students. Principals split on the decision whether to use 15 credits as opposed to 24 credits. Dr. Jones will gather further data and do a simulation on this year's seniors. Dr. Jones asked for feedback from committee members on this topic. The overall consensus was that this committee supports and agrees to the shift to 24 credits, as it will recognize more students. A letter of recommendation supporting this idea was motioned by Patsy Howell, seconded by John Traube. The vote carried unanimously. Dr. Jones and Mrs. Wallace will draft the letter.

Good of the Order

The December agenda will include a presentation by Dr. Connie Jones, on the Division of Academic Services department goals.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 p.m. The next meeting of the Curriculum Advisory Committee is scheduled for:

December 1, 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