

**The School District of Lee County**

**Curriculum Advisory Committee  
May 16, 2016  
6:00 p.m. – Training Room D  
Meeting Minutes**

**Mission Statement:**

To advise the School Board by recommending approaches to obtaining improved student achievement for all students through a coherent, rigorous academic course of study that provides the tools necessary to succeed in today's society. Emphasis will be placed on the dynamic development of a K-12 curriculum within a safe environment leading to both career and technical majors, the methods of instruction used to implement it, and the assessments of its effectiveness, together with a complementary professional development program to support it.

**Committee Members Present:** Kathleen Cherasia, Patricia Givens, April Ketron, Melissa Knablin-Liebal, Patti Lochner, Dr. Robert Mahone, Evelyn Murphy, Suzi Simone, John Steakley, Stephen Whitener

**Committee Members Absent:** David Adorno (excused), Elizabeth Blundo (excused), Joseph Camputaro (excused), Connie Dennis (unexcused), Dr. Kelly Lavis (excused), Judy Wilkerson (excused), Sandra Worth (excused)

**School Board Liaison Present:** Pam LaRiviere

**Staff Members Present:** Brandy Macchia and Melissa Robery

**Recording Secretary:** Jamie Fowler

**Presenters:** Lori Brooks, Dr. Robert Mahone

**Guests:** Betsy Vaughn, Brian Curls

**Welcome and Introduction of Members**

The meeting was called to order by Patti Lochner at 6:00 welcoming all committee members and guests.

**Review of Mission Statement and Purpose of Committee**

Patti asked everyone to review the mission statement and reminded everyone of the purpose of the committee.

**Reading and Approval of May 16, 2016 agenda**

There was a motion to approve the agenda as it was presented by Kathleen Cherasia, April Ketron seconded and all voted to approve.

**Reading and Approval of April 18, 2016 minutes**

There was a discussion among the committee that more topics were discussed at the April meeting and a request was made that these topics be added to the April minutes. Patti Lochner asked the committee members to send Jamie Fowler any items they wanted added to the minutes.

The April 18<sup>th</sup> minutes will be reviewed again at the first scheduled meeting next school year.

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#### Board Member Report

Mrs. LaRiviere reported that Board Members are compiling the topics that were discussed from all committees during the year. It is important that the Board knows the committees' concerns. That way the Board can have certain committees address concerns.

She also gave a reminder to any members that are serving their last year that if they want to be a part of the committee FY16-17 to go through the application process.

#### Graduation Requirements Graduation Data

Ms. Lochner introduced the presenter, Lori Brooks, Assistant Director for School Counseling Services.

#### Graduation requirements

Florida Department of Education puts out an educational flyer for parents that includes:

- credit requirements
- minimum grade point average
- assessment requirements for a minimum diploma
- accommodations for students with disabilities
- scholar & merit designations that students may earn
- secondary options students have

This educational flyer can be located on the District website under the Parent Portal under graduation requirements.

Some of the requirements for graduation include:

- 4 credits in Math
- 2.0 accumulative unweighted GPA (C average)
- Must pass assessments
  1. Algebra 1 end of course (EOC) assessment
  2. 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Florida Standard Assessments English Language Arts (FSA ELA)

With the Florida graduation requirements there are opportunities for students to qualify through alternative means. If a student does not pass FSA ELA, students have the chance to take the ACT which is an achievement test or SAT which is an aptitude test to meet the reading requirements.

Algebra 1 EOC is a test taken at the end of the course that counts as 30% of a student's annual grade. Students are able to retake the test. There is also the option of taking the PERT test (Postsecondary Education Readiness test) which is an alternative entrance exam for schools such as Florida Southwestern. If a student earns a score of 96 it can be used to secure the standard diploma for the math assessment.

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All 10<sup>th</sup> graders have the opportunity to take the PSAT. Students are encouraged to take this test because it gives them a good indication of how they will perform on the SAT.

Most High Schools have evening registration for incoming freshman.

The IB program and AICE program students have a different course progression per the State to receive IB or AICE diplomas. Each IB & AICE School has an information sheet that indicates the requirements by cohort year. It includes the required courses along with the electives the students have to choose from. Both programs are offered at selected district high schools and charter schools.

Every school has an Open House night that takes place before the school year starts. Other parent night events are scheduled on a school by school basis.

Some schools have a Student Assignment Night or Choice Open House that takes place at the schools. Schools will send dates they prefer over a certain time span to the district office. The District has staff that coordinates the dates for student assignment nights to help schools from overlapping dates. One of the things that is looked at in making this decision is families with multiple children at different grade levels.

Some high schools host a registration night. Often this depends on the size of the school and how many students they have. Schools have the freedom to pick the dates they prefer as long as it falls within the required time frame.

#### Graduation Rates

Federal regulations require the state to calculate a 4 year cohort graduation rate. It is an adjusted cohort graduation rate. Each state is required to use the same graduation rate calculation.

Cohort is defined as the group of students that are on the same schedule, based on the year they enter in grade 9 and if they graduate with a standard diploma in the 4 years since they entered high school. This includes all students regardless of what program they are in. Some students finish in their 5<sup>th</sup> year of high school. Those students do not count in the 4 year cohort as graduated and bring the graduation rates down.

Students that transfer to a different District do not count in the cohort.

Students that transfer in at any time in that 4 year cohort, even as a senior, are included in that 4 year cohort.

A graduate is a student that receives a standard diploma within their 4 year cohort.

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If a student does not pass the EOC for Algebra I, Algebra Camp is offered during the summer and the students are able to retest at the end. The PERT test is also given to these students which provides them an additional 2 opportunities to meet the math requirements. Classes are offered during the school year for additional help.

There are 2 types of certificates of completion:

1. Certificate of completion due to a low GPA. These students are encouraged to come back the 5<sup>th</sup> year to raise their GPA to a 2.0 (C average).
2. Pert eligible certificate. Students with this certificate are missing a pass rate on some assessment(s).

Graduation rates have changed for many reasons most recently. One of the reasons is because of the assessment change. Students are offered assistance to try and assist them complete their requirements.

Students are encouraged to complete the 4 year cohort but some students choose to get their GED which does have a negative impact on the graduation rates.

10 of 14 High Schools have increased their graduation rate.

Many of our High School charter schools (except for 3) are Alternative Charter schools. Students can stay until they age out at 21 years old. Some of the charter schools' graduation rates are lower, one contributing factor is that in some cases they may be dealing with more challenging students (academically and behaviorally).

Statute provides students have 4 years of high school. If they have an area of unmet needs after their 4 year cohort they are allowed one more year of continuous enrollment. After that there is the option of attending an Alternative charter school till the age of 21. A student with an IEP has the right to attend a traditional school until the age of 22.

For the students that traditional schools are just not working there are other opportunities offered. One being Job core where students work through a government program and earn their GED.

Students coming to the district under the age of 18 and are within the 4 year cohort are required to enroll and they are included in the 4 year cohort rates. This includes inclusion students and students from other countries that are just learning English.

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**Student Growth Portal Idea**

Mrs. Lochner introduced the presenter Dr. Robert Mahone, Curriculum Advisory Committee Member.

This presentation is based on an additional tool to enhance Castle. The goal is that this tool would allow students the opportunity to input into the system what interventions the student plans to attend. It will establish for each intervention which standards will be benefited and indicate a measureable improvement on mastering the specific standard.

Depending on Student progressions, the program would show where students need to be and where the improvements are needed. It can then figure out how long it takes to accomplish bringing students to mastery and providing success.

Brian Curls, coordinator and creator of the Castle program was present to build on the presentation and answer any question regarding Castle.

Castle is available for all schools to use but not all schools are using the program at the same level. It is used for interventions mainly at the middle school level. The schools that are using it have found it very successful with putting together all the resources and identifying what interventions are working and seeing the progress with students.

One of the benefits with Castle is that teachers always have the resources that were built even with any changes that might occur such as new testing since this is a district created program.

In moving forward for next year, the next step is to start identifying the interventions that are working so those interventions are used more throughout the district.

A motion to have a presentation about the Castle program for next school year was made by John Steakley and seconded by Melissa Knablin-Liebal and all voted to approve.

**Public Comment**

Betsy Vaughn, a retired Language Arts and Reading teacher of 24 years with 8 of those years in the district at Estero High.

With graduation rates, Betsy suggested to the committee that they research and look at the ELL rates and other subgroups. She recommends that if the district is moving toward proximity schools there needs to be standardization.

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**Committee Discussion 2016-2017 Meeting Schedule**

The committee discussed meeting schedule and topics for next school year.

A motion was made by John Steakley and seconded by April Ketron. All voted and approved on the following:

- First meeting to take place August 15 to establish specific task forces and topics
- Approval on 3 topics.
  1. Castle
  2. Process for implementation
  3. Vocational skills

**Good of the Order**

Patti Lochner shared that she was part of the Progress Monitoring Committee as a representative for Curriculum Advisory Committee. Renaissance Place (STAR 360), Achieve 3000, and iReady were the programs reviewed and Renaissance Place was the one the team recommended.

Motion to end the meeting at 7:46 made by Dr. Robert Mahone seconded by April Ketron and all voted to adjourn.