



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF LEE COUNTY

Curriculum Advisory Committee

May 18, 2015

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: Ms. Lori Fayhee, Mr. Thomas Latino, Dr. Kelly Lavis, Ms. Patti Lochner, Mr. John Traube, Dr. Judy Wilkerson, Dr. Rodney Winkler, and Mrs. Sandra Worth

Committee Members Absent: Ms. Christine Cartaya (excused), Mrs. Kathleen Cherasia (excused), Dr. Connie Dennis (excused), Ms. Jacqui Hill (excused), Mr. John Steakley, and Ms. Lauren Torres

School Board Liaison: Mrs. Pamela H. LaRiviere (excused) Mrs. Cathleen O'Daniel Morgan

Staff Members Present: Dr. Jeff McCullers – Director of Grants and Program Development

Recording Secretary: Mary Reider

Guests: None

Welcome

The meeting was called to order by Chair Thomas Latino at 6:03 pm. Mr. Latino welcomed all committee members and reminded everyone to silence their cell phones..

Review /Approval of Agenda and Meeting Minutes

Mr. Latino asked everyone to review the proposed agenda and meeting minutes of April 20, 2015. Motion to accept the proposed agenda made by Patti Lochner and seconded by Dr. Kelly Lavis. Motion Carried. Motion to accept the previous meeting minutes with correction made by Mr. John Traube and seconded by Dr. Kelly Lavis. Motion Carried.

Board Member Report

Mrs. Cathleen O'Daniel Morgan stated it is a busy time of year for Board members. Everyone is engaged with graduation ceremonies, scholarships, awards, recognitions and end of year performances.

The Board decided not to pursue the sales tax initiative at this time. In Mrs. Morgan's opinion, it is not a gone issue, but a tabled issue. The Board will continue discussions over the next few months about how they will talk to the public about our need for capital funds.

The Board voted 5-0 to direct the Superintendent to not include EOC (30%) grades for this semester. The decision was prompted in part by the disclosure that 3 of the EOC's in math will not be graded for student or school consumption until (the earliest) next fall. At this time, EOC's will not be a factor in a student being promoted to the next grade. When the Board made their decision, they did not understand the impact that it would have on students. It would be an opportunity for some students or a loss of opportunity for others. The Superintendent directed District Staff to give the tests, grade them and use them for progress monitoring only. Mrs. Morgan will no longer participate in same-day motions and actions made by the Board. Her belief is if there is a decision to be made about curriculum, the recommendation needs to come from the duly appointed committees of the Board. Additional areas that may be affected by the Board decision include VAM scores, and the TIF Grant.

A question and answer period followed among committee members and Mrs. Morgan.

Public Comment – Non CAC Members

None

Response to Public Comment

None

How is Testing Affecting the Psychology of the Student

Presented by: Dr. Jeff McCullers, Director of Grants and Program Development

Dr. McCullers stated there is quite a bit of research regarding classroom testing, but not as much on High Stakes Testing. He shared the following highlights of 6 studies of recent research regarding psychological effects of testing:

Elementary and secondary teachers report physical symptoms of test anxiety in some students.

Polesel, Dulfur, and Turbull (2012) conducted a survey of 8353 teachers in all states and territories of Australia regarding their beliefs about their national school accountability testing system known as the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). About ninety percent of teachers reported that some students had expressed feelings of anxiety, and about sixty percent reported that some students had cried about the testing.

Some teachers also pointed out that any test naturally creates some level of anxiety. The researchers acknowledged that the study was only concerned with teacher perceptions, so all data was secondary and thus of limited value, but recommended further study.

Test anxiety is more prevalent in high school students with low self-efficacy beliefs.

Social cognitive theory explains how beliefs about one's own skills and abilities strongly affect their acquisition and use. Sheikh, Sarabandi, & Khalighi (2014) studied 320 randomly-sampled high school students in Zahedan, Iran and found a significant negative correlation between self-efficacy beliefs and test anxiety. Students with a higher belief in their own academic ability were less likely to experience test anxiety. Personality traits related to passivity, low self-esteem, and feelings of inferiority were related to higher test anxiety.

The researchers suggested that test anxiety was related to traits and perceptions that develop over a long period of time and particularly during childhood and adolescence, and recommended that this be given attention by parents and teachers.

Elementary students show higher test anxiety regarding accountability testing than they do for regular classroom testing.

Segool, et al. (2013) studied 335 students in grades 3 to 5 in the midwestern United States, using multiple measures of test anxiety to compare responses to both everyday classroom testing with less-frequent high-stakes accountability testing. The study found that high-stakes accountability testing significantly increased test anxiety compared to classroom testing.

Teacher perceptions of student anxiety was also surveyed, and teachers reported that they perceived in their students a higher level of anxiety regarding high-stakes accountability testing.

Test anxiety may explain otherwise-hard-to-explain gender differences in test performance of high school students.

The SAT is a widely-used college entrance examination in the U.S., generally administered to high school juniors and consisting of major subsections including problems measuring mathematical ability and verbal ability. Historically, female students score significantly lower on the SAT. Hannon (2012) administered the SAT to 229 university students who had already taken the SAT in high school. The results showed the typical gender difference in verbal and mathematics subscores.

However, Hannon also conducted a measure of test anxiety and performance-avoidance in the same students. When controlling for these social-cognitive factor, the gender difference became trivial. This supports that all or most of the persistent gender difference in the SAT is attributable to test anxiety.

There are effective methods for reducing test anxiety.

Schools have ways to reduce test anxiety, which may especially be valuable to those students who experience clinical level symptoms that may affect test performance. Von der Embse, Barterian, & Segool (2013) conducted an analysis of the efficacy of ten selected intervention and treatment programs in comparison to no treatment with kindergarten through 12th grade children in the previous ten years. All of but one of the selected studies focused on secondary students. The selected studies had been conducted in Germany, India, Israel, Nigeria, United Kingdom, and United States.

The study found several effective interventions known to be effective in reducing other forms of anxiety. Cognitive behavioral therapy techniques were found to reduce anxiety and increase grade point average compared to untreated students. Other effective methods include relaxation techniques, systematic desensitization techniques, and biofeedback-based techniques.

References Dr. McCullers used for the above mentioned studies are:

- Appel, M., & Kronberger, N. (2012). Stereotypes and the achievement gap: Stereotype threat prior to test taking. *Educational Psychology Review*, 24(4), 609-635. Retrieved May 18, 2015 from http://www.researchgate.net/profile/Markus_Appel3/publication/259970782_Stereotype_threat_and_the_achievement_gap_Stereotype_threat_prior_to_test_taking/links/02e7e52ebe0141fa90000000.pdf
- Hannon, B. (2012). Test anxiety and performance-avoidance goals explain gender differences in SAT-V, SAT-M, and overall SAT scores. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 53(7), 816–820. doi:10.1016/j.paid.2012.06.003. Retrieved May 18, 2015 from <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3756515/pdf/nihms-447565.pdf>
- Polesel, J., Dulfer, N., & Turnbull, M. (2012). The experience of education: The impacts of high stakes testing on school students and their families. Literature Review prepared for the Whitlam Institute, Melbourne Graduate School of Education, and the Foundation for Young Australians. Retrieved May 18, 2015 from http://www.whitlam.org/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/409735/High_Stakes_Testing_An_Educators_Perspective.pdf.
- Segool, N. K., Carlson, J. S., Goforth, A. N., Von Der Embse, N., & Barterian, J. A. (2013). Heightened test anxiety among young children: Elementary school students' anxious responses to high-stakes testing. *Psychology in the Schools*, 50(5), 489-499. Retrieved May 18, 2015 from http://www.researchgate.net/profile/Nathaniel_Von_der_embse/publication/238061980_Heightened_test_anxiety_among_young_children_Elementary_school_students_anxious_responses_to_high-stakes_testing/links/0046351bf1349b6449000000.pdf?origin=publication_detail
- Sheikh, M., Sarabandi, H., & Khalighi, N. (2014). The Role of Self-Efficacy and Self-Perception Components on Students' Test Anxiety. *Advances in Environmental Biology*, 8(11). Retrieved May 18, 2015 from <http://www.aensiweb.com/old/aeb/special%205%202014/65-69.pdf>.
- von der Embse, N., Barterian, J., & Segool, N. (2013). Test anxiety interventions for children and adolescents: A systematic review of treatment studies from 2000–2010. *Psychology in the Schools*, 50(1), 57-71. Retrieved May 18, 2015 from http://www.researchgate.net/profile/Nathaniel_Von_der_embse/publication/238075255_Test_anxiety_interventions_for_children_and_adolescents_A_systematic_review_of_treatment_studies_from_2000-2010/links/0046351bf14192fdb1000000.pdf?origin=publication_detail

A discussion period ensued among committee members, staff and Board Liaison.

Mr. Latino thanked Dr. McCullers for his presentation.

Committee Comments

Based upon Mrs. Morgan's statements during Board Member Report and the Q & A session that followed, the Curriculum Advisory Committee drafted the ensuing motions:

1. *The Curriculum Advisory Committee recommends that the Board develop a policy to request and receive specific motions for action from various committees and staff in order to assure a deliberative and informed decision making process. Only emergency motions should be considered on the day proposed.* Motion made by Dr. Judy Wilkerson, seconded by Mr. John Traube. All Ayes-Motion Carried.

2. *The Curriculum Advisory Committee recommends that the District form a committee (including CAC members) to examine every assessment, including every item, every means of assessment, and every assessment policy for quality of design and for cognitive, diagnostic, and affective impact.* Motion made by Dr. Judy Wilkerson, seconded by Mr. John Traube. All Ayes-Motion Carried.
3. *The Curriculum Advisory Committee requests an additional meeting date of June 08, 2015 to the District Calendar in order for District Staff (Mrs. Kutz, Mrs. Robery, Mrs. Ralph, Mrs. Elkin and Dr. Itzen) to present ideas to the committee to address motion number 2.* Motion made by Mr. John Traube and seconded by Dr. Kelly Lavis. All Ayes-Motion Carried.

Good of the Order

Mr. Latino asked committee members to set a meeting date for the first Curriculum Advisory Committee of 2015-2016. Discussion was held. Mr. John Traube made a motion to set September 21, 2015 as the first meeting date of 2015-2016 for the Curriculum Advisory Committee. Motion seconded by Dr. Kelly Lavis. All Ayes-Motion Carried.

Closing Remarks

Mr. Latino announced he will no longer be a part of the Curriculum Advisory Committee. He now resides in another County and appreciates the time he spent with this committee.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Ms. Patti Lochner, seconded by Dr. Judy Wilkerson. The motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.

The next meeting of the Curriculum Advisory Committee is scheduled for **Monday, June 08, 2015 at 6:00 PM.** Curriculum Advisory Committee meetings are held at the Lee County Public Education Center, 2855 Colonial Blvd. Fort Myers, Florida – Training Room D.