



## THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF LEE COUNTY

*Continuous Systemic Improvement (CSI) Advisory Committee*  
*November 9, 2015*  
*6:00 p.m. – 7:30 PM Training Room "D" – Board Annex*  
**Meeting Minutes**

**Committee Members Present:** Tony Beougher, Larry Byrnes, Shelly Hampton, Cheryl Ammon-Kunkle, Christopher Lightfoot, Chris Quackenbush, Brian Rist, Kally Shiner-Nunes, Gery Treichler

**Committee Members Absent:** Victor Castro, Marcia Eichenauer (excused), Adam Hall (excused), Susan Shin-Harris (excused), Samantha Leroy, Tami Traiger (excused)

**School Board Liaison:** Ms. Mary Fischer

**Staff Members Present:** Dr. Richard J. Itzen, Director Research and Assessment, Mrs. Patti Elkin, Director Accountability, Ms. Cindy McClung, Coordinator Quality

**Recording Secretary:** Terri Saarinen

**Guests:** Ms. Shiner-Nunes's daughter

### Welcome

The meeting was called to order by CSI Chairman Mr. Brian Rist at 6:00 P.M. Information regarding advisory chair presentations to the School Board was shared as well as the two CSI provided recommendations to the School Board – to measure Strategic Plan elements with data the county [School District] controls, and to request feedback from the School Board regarding the recommendations received. Mr. Rist also spoke of other advisory committees and their forming subcommittees/workgroups in addition to the scheduled advisory meetings to get more accomplished. He suggested the CSI entertain this idea. Round robin introductions followed. It was mentioned by Dr. Itzen that he and Ms. Elkin would no longer serve as staff liaisons to CSI as Dr. Denise Carlin would be serving in that capacity beginning in January. Ms. Fischer added that although she hopes to remain on CSI, she may or may not, depending on outcome of board member assignments to advisory committees going forward.

### Review /Approval of Minutes and Meeting Agenda

Motion to approve the October minutes was made by Dr. Byrnes, seconded by Mr. Treichler. Vote taken. All ayes. Motion to approve October minutes carried.

Motion to approve this evening's agenda made by Dr. Byrnes, seconded by Ms. Fischer. Vote taken. All ayes. Motion to approve November meeting agenda carried.

### Board Member Report

Ms. Fischer shared that Lee is one of five districts in the state receiving the Florida Healthy School Districts Gold award, and mentioned how this recognition included, among others, the areas of Healthy School Environments, Community Involvement, and Employee Wellness.

Information and significant concerns from the community regarding the possible site for the new high school in the Bonita Springs was shared. The meeting scheduled for this evening was moved to Friday to accommodate a large turn-out. Ms. Fischer mentioned other land parcels as possibilities and said other site options will be explored, however there is a lack of available land in the desired area. She added that there are currently 2000 more students in the District than last year, and how the South and East zones are at capacity. Ms. Fischer was asked if progress is being made regarding new school funding and sales tax increase. Discussion ensued. Ms. Fischer was asked if the District would sell owned properties not suitable for schools. She said a property is for sale and other properties are under consideration for selling. Discussion

ensued. Additional comments were made about possible sales tax increase being used for maintenance of current facilities and not for new construction. Changes to regular scheduled maintenance to facilities occurred as result of economic downturn.

Ms. Fischer was asked if the District employs a grant writer and if person is good at finding funding. Ms. Fischer said that historically and traditionally the District has been recipient of grants. Ms. Shiner-Nunes mentioned possible funding options from President Obama's *My Brother's Keeper Initiative*. Ms. Fischer asked Ms. Shiner-Nunes to forward additional information to her.

Additional comments ensued. Ms. Fischer was asked about environmental sustainability in new construction to offset costs. She shared that county sustainability groups are already partnering with the District.

Ms. Fischer shared information regarding the Board Student Advisory committee, mentioned a student-proposed light rail system to help solve student transportation needs, and how it is hoped students ideas and solution will move us forward. She added that recent transportation issues, like late buses and driver shortage, are being addressed. Over 200 new drivers have been interviewed and are awaiting CDL certification. Nearly another 70 have interviews pending. She gave kudos to the Superintendent, Human Resources and Transportation for their efforts.

Ms. Fischer talked about attending the Pride and Patriotism event at The Barbara B. Mann Performing Arts Hall and the high quality of the student work featured. She also noted the lack of press coverage for this good news story.

#### **Public Comment**

No comment received.

#### **Open Agenda Discussion and Item Solicitation**

Mr. Treichler suggested forming a CSI sub-committee to focus on Inclusion and offered to serve as chair. He would like this group to look into what the District thinks inclusion is about, the timeline for implementation, parental impact, and to share research regarding inclusion. Dr. Itzen commented that Exception Student Education (ESE) administrators will attend the January CSI meeting to provide CSI with additional information. Ms. Quackenbush suggested the use of a Ben Franklin ballot sheet, which would weigh the pros and cons. Discussion ensued. Ms. McClung suggested waiting until after the January meeting before forming a sub group. Ms. Shiner- Nunes asked if forming a sub-committee is in violation of Board policy or sunshine law.

Chairman Rist said forming a sub-committee would need a motion and vote. Motion to create sub-committee to explore options for inclusion made by Ms. Quackenbush and seconded by Mr. Treichler. Vote taken, seven in favor, three opposed. Inclusion sub-committee formed, chaired by Mr. Treichler. Ms. Fischer sent inquiry to Mr. Martin regarding formation of sub-committees, rules for such and if sunshine applies. Meeting will need to be advertised, open to the public, and scribed.

Mr. Beougher talked about Strategic Plan Focus Area 1 and asked if the District is looking at recent national work around Personalized learning or Blended learning as a means of fostering higher student engagement and overall performance. He shared the difference between the two, and cited The Gates Foundation work around personalized learning that has produced some promising results <http://collegeready.gatesfoundation.org/student-success/personalized-learning/>, as well as a case study from The Christensen Institute which provides evidence to support positive outcomes <http://www.christenseninstitute.org/key-concepts/blended-learning-2/>.

Mr. Beougher also talked about technology, asking what the District wants students to be able to do with Chromebooks, how the District plans to measure the success of this technology initiative, and how teachers are being trained to better engage with students by using these devices. Comments and discussion ensued. Ms. Quackenbush said that while personalized learning is excellent, it does not fall under Florida Senate House Bill 7069, which requires paced learning and standards based testing. Mr. Lightfoot said teachers didn't receive Chromebooks and don't always know how to help students since teachers don't have Google OS. Dr. Itzen shared information about the Chromebook rollout and the train the trainer model used. He challenged the CSI advisory committee to not only ask the questions but to also provide answers, suggestions, and advice. Chairman Rist also commented on the need for this group to bring suggestions,

solutions and ideas forward.

Additional comments and questions ensued regarding the use of software as an option, the cost of creating our own software tailored to the needs of Lee County, the limited availability of IT staff to write code, the budget needed to support technology initiatives, Chromebook repair, who maintains devices over the summer, and what happens when they “walk away”. Florida Virtual School [FLVS] was also mentioned as was the incompatibility going between classroom learning, home education, and virtual school (physical text book, vs. software learning programs, the quality of those programs and having to “start over” with each change).

Ms. McClung provided information about Chromebooks, the RFI/RFP process used for device selection, how the students she has seen are thrilled with Chromebooks. She said that while teachers received training, teachers did not receive Chromebooks. She also commented that FLVS constraints may have more to do with course requirements and less about the technology used. Dr. Itzen added that one of the biggest challenges in terms of training is teachers often know less about technology than the students they instruct. Ms. Fischer suggested CSI members view the documentary **Most Likely to Succeed** to get a picture of tonight’s discussion. She added that it is important to understand today’s kids are different.

Additional comments were made regarding Common Core and its fit into the Strategic Plan. Ms. Quackenbush shared how she is hearing from students that they don’t like learning and don’t want to go to school because of testing. She also would like to hear from the child development experts. Is it advisable to learn from screen or from tactile book? She mentioned the Walden School not using technology in the classroom, and spoke of a recent study of children choosing books over technology. Mr. Beougher asked for the name of that particular study.

Additional comments and discussion ensued. Mr. Lightfoot spoke of top performing countries, their use of technology, and how the US is lagging behind while trying to hold onto classic means of education. Dr. Byrnes said there has been a long standing issue between the District and providers of teacher education programs. He suggested efforts between the District and colleges offering teacher immersion programs be increased. Ms. McClung agreed this is an area where effort is needed. She shared that she also places teacher interns and said how those coming into the District with their reading endorsement and/or ESOL endorsement come ready to teach.

Chairman Rist talked about Governor Scott’s STEM teacher program so STEM teachers work in business and industry over the summer to get an idea of what is needed. Ms. Fischer talked about recent legislative workshop at Florida SouthWestern University and how both FSW and FGCU are changing courses offered because of low demand. She said the low census in Teacher Education is a national problem and District staff are working on ways to move people into the school environment.

Dr. Byrnes, based on discussion in this committee, spoke of concerns about the unintended consequences of well-intended but poorly planned and/or implemented policies. (For example: throwing money at a problem without additional engagement and assessing the decision to do so.)

Chairman Rist said the CSI committee is to help guide the Strategic Plan. He agreed with Dr. Byrnes about not rushing down a particular path. Dr. Byrnes added that a valuable contribution of the CSI is to be cautious of the unintended consequences of decisions made by the Board/District. Additional comments were made about seeking other funding sources, participating in trials, leveraging partnerships, the hazards of retina damage and radiation exposure from using technology, how use of computers as a teaching tool doesn’t work, of possible damage being done to a whole generation of children, how technology is necessary, a tool but it doesn’t replace the teacher.

### **Recommendation to the Board**

Ms. Fischer clarified that the Board does not do the work recommended, but rather it is done by staff under the direction of the Superintendent who then report back to the Board. Ms. Fischer summarized topics from this meeting that she will share with Dr. Adkins. Topics include: Personalized learning and blended learning, concerns with unintended consequences, focus on Strategic Plan, look for suggestions and solutions, look for grant money and free dollars, health concerns from using technology, and plans for teachers to leverage new technology.

### **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn made by Ms. Quackenbush, seconded by Mr. Treichler. Meeting ended at 7:40 PM.

The next meeting of the CSI Advisory Committee is scheduled for **Monday, January 11th at 6:00 PM in Training Room A**.

CSI meetings are held at the Lee County Public Education Center, 2855 Colonial Blvd. Fort Myers, Florida

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