

LIBERTY COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT ADVISORY COUNCIL

Minutes

September 12, 2019 at 9:00 a.m.

APPROVED by DAC members on November 14, 2019

DAC Chairperson, Becky Brown welcomed all in attendance and called the meeting to order. The following members and visitors were present: David Summers, Gay Lewis, Jessica Bennett, Becky Brown, Charlotte Brandon, Beth Brown, Adyson Cain, Nathan Carpenter, Grant Conyers, Mary C. Davis, Ben Fleming, Neil Grantham, Lynn Guthrie, Joan Hall, Darrell Johnson, Sawyer Landrum, Chesnee Layne, Jennifer Lee, Jordan Lee, Jolynn McCoy, Gloria Mendez, Hilary Peddie, Becky Shuler, Jason White and Eric Willis.

The minutes of the May 3, 2019 meeting were disseminated, and Chairperson Brown asked those in attendance to read over the minutes for approval. Becky Shuler made a motion to approve the minutes and Jason White seconded the motion. Everyone was in favor and the minutes were approved.

OLD BUSINESS: None

Superintendent Report: Report given by Superintendent David H. Summers

Superintendent Summers thanked Becky Brown for serving as the DAC President for over a decade. He stated that he admired her “glowing, can-do attitude!” He also welcomed all the people serving on the council for the 2019-2020 school year.

Mr. Summers stated that in the first 5 weeks of school that there have been “some bumps, but not too many.” He said that Hurricane Michael has been a “curse and a blessing.” “It caused a lot of damage, but a lot of money has been invested in Liberty County.”

Mr. Summers went on to congratulate the students, teachers, administrators and staff on Liberty County School District “being an “A” District and LCHS an “A” school!” Both W. R. Tolar K-8 and Hosford Elementary and Junior High School received a “B” rating. Superintendent Summers stated his goal of wanting all schools in Liberty County to be “A” schools for the 2019-2020 school year. He went on to say that we can achieve this by formulating goals, and working hard.

He reported that construction on the new high school is moving along. The gym/auditorium has a seating capacity of 1,700 and weather would not pose a problem. He further stated that the rest of the new school will probably not be completed until early June.

DAC Guidelines and Procedures

Gay Lewis disseminated the DAC Guidelines and presented an overview to the DAC members. She stated that the objective of the DAC is to “participate in decision making by advising principals, superintendent and the school board in matters pertaining to schools, the school district and/or their educational programs.” Ms. Lewis read from the DAC Guidelines handout, one of the responsibilities of the council is to “act as a liaison between the district and community. She said that the council is comprised of:

1. a parent representative from each school,

2. one additional parent from each Title I school,
3. teachers from each school site,
4. students from the high school,
5. students from both middle schools
6. non-instructional school district employees,
7. business or community representatives

The terms of office will be from October 1st through September 30th of each year. Students shall serve for one school-year term only, while other members can serve for two years.” Ms. Lewis reported that a “member shall no longer old membership should he cease to be a resident of the area to be served.”

She stated that we would be electing new officers later during the meeting. Offices to be filled were Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Secretary. The chairperson will preside at all meetings; the duties of the vice-chairperson shall be to represent the chairperson in assigned duties as needed. The secretary shall keep the minutes of each meeting. Ms. Lewis announced that “our meetings will be held quarterly, unless an additional meeting is deemed necessary.”

INTRODUCTION OF NEW DAC MEMBERS:

New DAC representatives from HEJHS:

Adyson Cain, student rep.

Nate Carpenter, student rep.

Janessa Edwards, teacher

New DAC representatives from WRT:

Sawyer Landrum, student rep.

Jordan Lee, student rep.

Jennifer Lee, teacher

Neil Grantham, non-instructional

Grant Conyers, parent & community member

Charlotte Brandon, parent

New DAC representatives from LCHS:

Ben Fleming, student rep.

Gloria Mendez, student rep.

Hilary Peddie, parent & community member

Becky Shuler, parent

Mary Flowers, teacher

Robyn Carpenter, non-instructional

New DAC representative from LELC:

Jolynn McCoy, parent

NEW BUSINESS:

School Reports and SIPs

HOSFORD ELEMENTARY & JR. HIGH SCHOOL – Report given by Jessica Bennett, Principal

Ms. Bennett stated that Hosford School met their Student Improvement Plan goals and they are “pleased with their score.” She stated the focus has been on learning gains in Reading and Math and attendance. “HEJHS is averaging 94% daily attendance, last year the attendance was 92.6%.” Phone calls are made if students are not in attendance.

Ms. Bennett, said “Student Improvement Plans are to continue targeting 5th and 6th grades academics to keep scores up. Another part of the plan is to focus on 8th grade algebra and pre-algebra students and to continue improving attendance.

WR TOLAR – Report given by Jason White, Assistant Principal

Asst. Principal Jason White stated that WR Tolar is a “B” school! ELA was most improved, the iReady curriculum helped the students to improve. “Our teachers are making phone calls if a student has too many absences, and this is helping our attendance” stated Mr. White. Goals for the upcoming school year, we will continue what we did last year and include improving RTI and staff collaboration.

LIBERTY COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL – Report given by Eric Willis, Principal

Mr. Willis was pleased to announce that LCHS is an “A” school for the 2nd straight year! He stated that LCHS continues to work on attendance by incorporating “seat time.” Mr. Willis, Timothy Davis (assistant principal) and Robyn Carpenter review the attendance reports. The Grad Coaches and Tutors helped students to improve their grades. Tutoring was provided for students in the lowest quartiles. For students with the lowest quartiles in ELA, we are implementing progress monitoring. LCHS’s goals are to continue doing what was done last year and to continue to work at increasing attendance of students.

LIBERTY EARLY LEARNING CENTER- Report given by Chesnee Layne, Early Learning Center Supervisor

Chesnee Layne reported that Liberty Early Learning Center serves 70 preschool students between both Hosford & Tolar sites. Of the 70 students, 21 students currently have an IEP (Individual Education Plan). Thirty percent qualify for special services in the Pre-K disabilities program. The State of Florida requires 85% of VPK students attend. Ms. Layne stated, “LELC meets and exceed student/teacher ratios. LELC has 4 FL certified teachers, with 3 in-field teachers certified in Preschool Education or Prekindergarten age 3 through 3rd grade and 1 teacher is certified in ESE K-12.

LELC’s program receives funding through VPK (state funds), FTE, and VPK Extended day fees. LELC has a working relationship with Liberty County Schools District 21st Century Community Learning Center and HIPPY (Home Intervention Preschool Years), Early Steps and with the Liberty County Health Department dental van.

LELC also participates in Pre-K (Child Find) screenings to check development every other month. Children ages 3-5 are invited to participate. The next screening will be held on October 29th at the Blountstown Civic Center.

GOALS for 2019-2020:

- Increase Kindergarten Readiness Rate for all VPK children entering kindergarten.
- Increase attendance in VPK; All VPK kids attend 85% of the time as required by the state.
- Create a smooth transition between Pre-K to Kg at both schools.

Ms. Layne provided a Child Find prescreening handout to the principals and Ms. Guthrie to put on the LCSD website.

Chairperson Becky Brown asked the DAC members if there was any input regarding the SIPs. There was none given.

A motion was made by Jason White to approve the School Improvement Plans as presented. Neil Grantham seconded. All School Improvement plans were approved by the DAC members.

Parent Involvement Plans:

HOSFORD ELEMENTARY & JR. HIGH SCHOOL – Report given by Jessica Bennett, Principal

Principal Bennett presented the Parent Involvement Plan for HEJHS. She reported that communication with parents is of utmost importance. She stated the PIP is somewhat the same as last years. They post a lot on Facebook, talk with parents one on one, hold Data Chats and post items on Parent Square.

Ms. Bennett explained that “Family Nights will try and encompass a little of everything. There is a Family Night with a Book Fair scheduled for next Tuesday. Every 1st Friday of the month, there will be a family breakfast served in the lunchroom. At last Friday’s activity, 75 parents attended! Ms. Bennett stated, “the dynamics in every family is different.”

W. R. TOLAR K-8 SCHOOL – Report given by Jason White, Assistant Principal

Asst. Principal White informed the council that W. R. Tolar’s Parent Involvement Plan was not quite finished but that they would continue their parent activities as they have previously. He stated that WRT utilizes Parent Square and Facebook to pass along information to parents.

LIBERTY COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL – Report given by Eric Willis, Principal

Principal Willis stated that LCHS has several Parent Nights planned. The topics will vary, including a night to discuss Dual Enrollment, a night to discuss Bright Futures, a night to help parents with applying for FASFA and a night of discussion regarding Title I. They will continue to have the 8th Grade Parent Night and the tour of the school for upcoming freshmen. Mr. Willis said that one goal is to use Parent Square more. LCHS also has a Facebook page now.

Chairperson Brown called for a motion on the two Parent Involvement Plans (PIPs) that were presented. Hilary Peddie made the motion to approve the 2 PIPs (HEJHS and LCHS). Becky Shuler seconded the motion and the PIPs were approved.

School-Parent Compacts

Principal Willis distributed LCHS’ School-Parent Compact and the DAC members were asked to review it. Mr. Willis and Ms. Bennett discussed what the compacts contain. There weren’t any additions, suggestions or deletions needed per the council.

Jennifer Lee made the motion to approve all 3 compacts, Becky Shuler seconded. The compacts were approved.

School Recognition Funds

Both Principal Willis (LCHS) and Principal Bennett (HEJHS) presented the award breakdown for the school recognition funds. They explained that their staff had already voted and both schools’ staff voted for Option 1. Option 1 pays the teachers 2 times the number of teachers PLUS 1 time the number of

Paras, office staff and student health aides and ½ times the number of custodians and lunchroom workers.

Motion to accept this breakdown of school recognition funds was made by Becky Shuler, seconded by Charlotte Brandon. The council voted in the affirmative to approve the School Recognition Funds.

Student Concerns:

HOSFORD ELEMENTARY & JR. HIGH SCHOOL – Student Reps: Adyson Cain and Nate Carpenter

A student representative stated that Top Score Writing is not as good as Write Score.

WR TOLAR – Student Reps: Jordan Lee and Sawyer Landrum

No comments

LIBERTY COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL – Student Reps: Gloria Mendez and Ben Fleming

LCHS' representatives expressed concern that food in the lunchroom is not appetizing. The "apples are brown and the milk is slimy." There was also a complaint that "our lunchbreak is not long enough."

High School students would like to have a salad bar, as of now...there is no variety.

Much discussion ensued regarding lunches and the schools and the new high school. The design of the new high school's lunchroom, legislative restrictions on how much salt and butter can be used, and the amount of food that is thrown away at each meal served.

Ms. Bennett suggested that a "share table" be incorporated at WR Tolar and LCCHS, like at Hosford School.

Ms. Becky Shuler mentioned that her son complains about "being forced outside." Mr. Willis responded that it is a "monitoring issue."

It was suggested that the schools start a "food backpack program" to send food home with needy students before the food expires.

LCCHS' rep, Ben Fleming asked, "If the outgoing seniors would get to walk through the new high school before graduating?"

Superintendent Summers, answered that it depends on the construction timeline.

Parent Concerns:

There were some complaints concerning issues with grading using iReady and the progress reports in FOCUS. If a student hasn't met the AR goal, it automatically shows an "F". Is there a way to at least put a percentage?

Mrs. Lewis stated that the issue is a valid concern and needs to be addressed.

Another issue mentioned was the high school's Social Studies teacher position having a substitute right now. It was reported that a new teacher has been hired and will start soon.

Mr. Grant Conyers brought up several issues concerning athletics.

1. Middle Schools: Baseball and softball need batting cages
2. People that volunteer get turned down
3. Transportation problems-not enough CDL drivers to transport athletes
4. No JV Football team at the high school – Makes it hard to compete with other schools that have JV teams

Mr. Conyers stated “some parents decide on where their children go to school base on athletic possibilities.

Superintendent Summers commented, “we are living in a different world than when we were in school. Not as many students come out to play sports.” Mr. Summers’ had some ideas to improve the athletic program.

1. Get back to requiring all coaches to get their CDLs.
2. Pay a stipend to people driving buses.
3. Put a committee together including “key players” to discuss ways to improve our athletic programs.
4. Raise the supplements for coaches

Neil Grantham stated that we need to have consistent coaches at the middle school level.

District Reports:

21st Century Grant – Report given by Beth Brown, Project Manager

21st CCLC Summer Program had an active summer with field trips to the EO Wilson Biophilia Center, Gulf Specimen Marine Lab, Zoo World, Challenger Learning Lab, Wakulla Springs and Blue Springs. Summer Activities included Kids in the Kitchen, 4H Presentations, Art & Music with Liberty Arts, Public Library Read Alouds, Reading, Math & Science Activities and Enrichment Lessons.

In June, Sednet and Project Hope presented “Mental Health after Michael.” In July, there was a musical performance with a PowerPoint explaining why music is important in schools.

Upcoming event: Baggin’ Books and Family Reading Night is scheduled for September 17th, 2019. The attendance this year has been averaging about 95.

The 21st Century Grant runs on a 5-year cycle, and our 5th year ended on July 31st, 2019. We are currently operating with an extension which ends September 30th. We have high hopes of being funded and will keep everyone informed.

Technology – Report given by Lynn Guthrie

Ms. Guthrie reported that the infrastructure is an ongoing process and still being worked on to improve it. Touch panels will be installed at the new high school.

Curriculum Update- report given by Gay Lewis, Director of Instruction/Curriculum

Gay Lewis explained that Liberty County School District receives much needed funds from Federal Grants, FTE and the state.

Title I Grant – LCSD receives approximately \$350,000.00 to cover salaries, professional development, materials & supplies, parent involvement, digital software, and curriculum textbooks. According to the parent surveys, those that responded voted to purchase computer software, supplemental teaching positions and instructional materials.

Perkins Grants – The Perkins Secondary Grant allocation was \$14,104.00 and the Perkins Rural Sparsely allocation was \$28,361.00. These grants pay for our CTE Programs, travel for our Agriculture and Allied teachers, instructional materials, industry certifications, a portion of salaries and IT programs (MOS certifications). The K-8 schools receive funds for their MOS certifications. The high school has several programs that this grant sustains: ServSafe, Agriculture class & Future Farmers of America Club, HOSA and the Childcare program.

Title IV (\$24,777.00) and Title V (\$20,565.00) Grants – These two grants are used for supplementing extended days, tutoring, mentoring and grad coaching. These two grants were very beneficial last year in helping our students succeed academically.

Title II Grant (63,726.00) – This grant pays for professional development for teachers and the new teacher coach that supports new teachers.

Safety Update – report given by Darrell Johnson, School Safety Specialist

Mr. Johnson reported that the safety plans that the State is requiring have been completed concerning the “single point entry” at each school. The reasoning behind the hardening is to “keep everyone safe while on campus.” Currently, there are issues with the gates at W. R. Tolar. The next funding project is more radios for the schools. It is a work in progress.

Election of 2019-2020 DAC Officers:

The floor was opened for nominations for the 2019-2020 District Advisory Council officers. Out-going Chairperson Becky Brown nominated Becky Shuler for Chairperson. No other names were brought up for nomination. The council voted “yea” on Mrs. Shuler’s nomination.

Beth Brown nominated Grant Conyers as Vice-Chairperson. No other names were brought up for nomination. The motion carried unanimously.

For the office of DAC Secretary, Becky Shuler nominated Joan Hall. Jason White seconded. Again, no other individuals were nominated, and the council unanimously voted in the affirmative.

Set Next Meeting:

Becky Brown made the motion to set the next meeting for November 14th at 9:00 a.m. Jason White seconded the motion and all agreed.

Adjourn Meeting:

Becky Shuler made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Darrell Johnson seconded, all were in favor. The meeting was adjourned.