

District Advisory Committee Minutes

March 7, 2018

The District Advisory Committee (DAC) met on Wednesday, March 7, 2018, at 5:15 pm at Deltona High School, media center.

Ms. Angela Kopnicky, chairman, called the meeting to order at 5:15 pm. February minutes were posted on the web for review prior to the meeting. The minutes were unanimously approved. Ms. Melody Johnson, school board member; Ms. Teresa Marcks, chief academic officer; Mr. Gary Marks, area superintendent; Ms. Saralee Morrissey, director of planning and business services/ student assignment; Ms. Patty Corr, Galaxy Middle principal; Mr. Monty Boles, River Springs Middle principal intern; Ms. Susan Reaves, Deltona Middle assistant principal; and Ms. Nancy Wait, director of community information, were all in attendance.

Ms. Kopnicky asked members for three volunteers to serve as the nominating committee. The nominating committee members are: Leslie LaRue, George Marks Elementary and DeLand High, lelarue@volusia.k12.fl.us, Kathy Delp, Sunrise Elementary, ksdelp@volusia.k12.fl.us, Rebecca Swanson, University High, raswanso@volusia.k12.fl.us. E-mail the nominating committee members if you are interested in serving or would like to nominate someone to serve as chairman or vice-chairman for the 2018-19 school year. If you nominate someone, please make sure they are willing to serve.

Mr. Marks brought greetings on behalf of Mr. Russell. He discussed the following items:

- Middle school expo- showcased the uniqueness of each middle school. The event was well received with some schools hosting more than 300 guests
- Concern of Chronic Absenteeism - Chronic absenteeism is defined by a student who misses 10% of school (that's 2 absences per month). After spring break everyone should be refreshed and ready to hit the ground running
- Safety- see something, say something, pay attention to social media posts and check backpacks before student leaves home
- [Volusia Vibes](#) – is a district publication that shares positive activities taking place in every school. Share with your family, friends, community.

Ms. Patty Corr, Galaxy Middle principal; Susan Reaves, Deltona Middle assistant principal; and Mr. Monty Boles, River Springs Middle principal intern, presented on Middle School Redesign. Many parents and students are scared to send their children to middle school, especially the sixth graders. The middle school expo was an opportunity to reassure parents about middle school and showcase what they have to offer. Middle schools sometimes lack offering the sense of belonging versus the high schools that offer clubs, sports, AVID. Through the academies high schools students feel like they are a part of something or belong. The concept of redesign is to offer more than one way to learn. Ms. Corr shared how her STEM academy is project-based and blended learning. The students in the academy have the same four teachers. It is like a school within a school. She shared not all STEM academies are the same.

Ms. Reaves talked about the three academies Deltona Middle currently offers: STEM Academy, Agriscience Academy and Performing Arts Academy. Next year they will have six academies available. Their goal is to offer wall to wall academies like

Mainland High currently offers. Click [here](#) to view their academy brochure. Mr. Boles, Rivers Springs Middle principal intern, surveyed 60 students in each grade level to find out what they would like to have in an academy. The students requested more clubs, culinary and digital and technology classes. They began with mixed media academy which involves researching free apps on the phone and then presenting to teachers opportunities that could help them in class. This academy is attached to a class called innovations, which is a class that allows students to implement a program they are passionate about. They are required to give presentations and this year they organized a beach clean-up. River Springs Middle also offers a culinary academy. They grow the food they are preparing and twice a month offer lunch deliveries.

All three middle school representatives offered to have students come shadow for a half of day at their academy so students can see the options that are available in middle schools.

Member Comments

- How many social workers does VCS have? There are currently 16 social workers in Volusia County Schools.
- How often or when are the “nudge” letters sent to parents of children with chronic attendance? At the elementary level it is sent to the schools every 20 membership days and then the principal designee reviews the students who are receiving a letter and make a decision to send; at the secondary level it is up to the principal's discretion how often they could send it since they can make it available to a parent at any time from our reports and download and Crosspoint.
- A suggestion was made to offer situational awareness training to staff, students and parents.

Ms. Melody Johnson, school board member, shared that she spoke to the constitutional revision commission in Jacksonville. She feels like they are hearing us and she is still working on the DCD. Ms. Johnson also shared that she is visiting her 16 schools and listening to ideas on safety.

The next meeting will be April 4 at Mainland High School. The topic will be SACS Accreditation. The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 pm.