

Act 141 Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
September 14, 2023
5:00 p.m.

In Attendance:

Committee Members: Dr. Sieta Achampong, Beth Light, Eric Turman, Tim Wendling, Dr. Tamara Willis, Eugene Spells, Melanie Cook, Dr. Marisol Craig, Doug Thompson Leader, Michele Rolko, Dr. Travis Waters, Dr. Lori Suski

District Administrators: Portia Slaughter, Adam Nornhold

Interested Citizens: Christine Anderson (via Zoom), Laura Harding

- Dr. Waters welcomed the group back from the summer break.
- Dr. Suski updated the committee on the proposed plan amendment that was submitted to the Dauphin County Court of Common Pleas in July. The Rule to Show Cause was posted in August, but there has been no further information received from the Court.
- Mr. Turman reviewed the annual snapshot for 2023 which contains four (4) goals for the comprehensive plan:
 - Building a Strong Foundation
 - Many Cultures, One Community
 - Academic Focus on Equity and Excellence for All
 - High School Graduation Through Successful Transitions
- The committee members offered the following comments/suggestions in response to the document shared by Superintendent Turman:
 - Data sources need to be cited on the document.
 - Graduation cohort – numbers are not always a clear picture of true graduation rate – makes numbers look artificially low.
 - Need explanation on data.
 - How is Cohort 4 and 5 calculated?
 - Do people understand pathways?
 - Was root cause analysis done?
 - A system should be put in place for guidance.
 - Do students have ownership of their E-School account to check their status?
 - Students should be trained to check their academic progress.

- Ms. Rolko expressed concern that students are sometimes not provided with courses they need. She shared an example of how some students who already had her P.E. class are put on her roster again or show up in her class. Ms. Cook asked why a student would be going to a class who is not rostered. Ms. Rolko said that students want to be in class with their friends. Mr. Spells indicated that he is working with counselors on credits and holding them accountable to track students' credits toward graduation. Dr. Achampong stated her concern that SciTech is "lumped in." There should be some mechanism in E-School to avoid kids being scheduled again into the same class. Students trust the adults that are doing the scheduling. Dr. Waters asked how the District is tracking that students have met graduation requirements. Mr. Turman said that every counselor and principal are required to review and sign off to ensure that all requirements are met for graduation for each senior. Mr. Turman said that that students should move through high school as a cohort for the purpose of tracking progress and having one counselor for seniors is unrealistic.
- Mr. Turman indicated that an action step for Goal 1 is to plan to move to a 7-period schedule and move away from the block schedule at the high school level. Plans are in process to meet with teachers, develop a mock schedule and review staffing implications.
- Mr. Turman also shared the plan to bring back career pathways (formerly known as ROAR) and to make it phenomenal by partnering with HACC, Temple, HU, and Central Penn College to provide opportunities for juniors and seniors to be dually enrolled. Mr. Turman said that the core focus will still be on Math, Science, English and Social Studies and the infusion of pathways.
- Mr. Turman thanked the committee for their feedback on the four (4) goals of the comprehensive plan and asked that questions or further recommendations be sent to him. Mr. Turman shared that he will be presenting the draft of the comprehensive plan at the September 26th School Board/Receiver General Business meeting.
- Dr. Suski acknowledged Laura Harding's attendance at the meeting as an interested citizen. Dr. Suski also shared that she will be reviewing committee membership as some individuals do not attend meetings at all. Dr. Suski thanked all those present for their service.
- The meeting was adjourned at 6:02 p.m.
- The next meeting will be held on October 12, 2023 at 5:00 p.m.