

Harrisburg School District

Act 141 Advisory Committee Meeting

June 13, 2024  
5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Minutes

***In Attendance:***

***Committee Members:*** Melanie Cook, Laura Harding, Michele Rolko, Dr. Andria Saia, Dr. Marcia Stokes, Dr. Lori Suski, Doug Thompson Leader, Dr. Travis Waters

***Staff:*** Adam Nornhold, Dr. Stacey Rossi

***Consultant:*** Leland Nelson

- Dr. Waters welcomed everyone to the meeting and shared that the agenda for the meeting was a presentation by Dr. Stacey Rossi, College & Career Coordinator, and Leland Nelson, Consultant, on Career Pathways in the District.
- Dr. Rossi and Mr. Nelson presented their [power point](#) to the committee.
- Part of the presentation provided data on students taking dual enrollment courses at Temple, HACC, and HU. Ms. Harding asked if all the students had completed their courses. Dr. Rossi indicated that most passed but a few dropped out of Temple not anticipating how hard it would be to take two courses at once while in high school. Next year they will limit it to one class since they are targeting juniors and junior year is a heavy course load year in high school.
- Dr. Rossi shared that the partnership with Temple University will continue in fall of 2024. Dr. Suski shared that a teacher residency program is also starting with Penn State Harrisburg and is a three-year degree program. Dr. Rossi said that the District is also replicating the Teacher Cadet program from Susquehanna Twp. SD and will begin that at Melrose with 2 – 3 students who performed well at Temple.
- Dr. Rossi indicated that she is also working on several potential partnerships such as a dental hygienist program with Verber Dental, a cosmetology program through Barber & Beauty Academy, and an optometry program with Horizon Eye Care.
- The committee members posed the following questions:

- Are barbering and culinary arts producing life-sustaining wages?
  - Do we want to “kill kids’ dreams”? It’s okay to follow dreams but train kids with entrepreneurial skills.
  - A business model needs to be built into this. Do kids understand what it costs to live?
- Mr. Nelson indicated that they looked at the top 50 employers through Labor & Industry as well as the high priority occupations through South Central PA Works. He said that the School District should be developing the workforce of tomorrow.
  - Four (4) Pathways were discussed: Business Admin/Project Management, Cyber Security, Transportation & Logistics, Military Science
  - Pre-apprenticeship programs were discussed. A list of local employers interested in helping to create learning opportunities for students was also provided.
  - Discussion centered around the need to begin exploration at the middle school level. Ms. Harding asked if we could bring back industrial arts programs at the middle school level. She believes that losing these programs has had an impact on our students. Dr. Rossi said that the District is advertising for middle school careers teachers, and these types of projects could be implemented. Mr. Thompson Leader shared that his mother is a Family/Consumer Science teacher, and that people are no longer pursuing those certifications. Dr. Waters said that PDE is going to have to be more flexible. Mr. Thompson Leader said that STEM teachers need to give kids a chance to fail in those areas by exposing them to projects like tearing down and rebuilding an engine. Ms. Cook said that PDE is going to have to be more flexible with certification requirements as there are people that have skills/capacity who do not hold certifications.
  - Ms. Cook said that the slide in the presentation that jumps out to her is “Find your spark – Expose/Educate/Empower.” She stated that waiting until junior year is too late. She also commented that the Stanford University study percentages cited in the presentation could probably be thrown out as the data gathered is probably on Caucasian and Asian subjects. She said she can support aspects of Pathways, but there are significant portions that will not fit with a large body of kids in Harrisburg SD.
  - Dr. Saia recommended the Partnership for Career Development. Dr. Suski said that the District is a participant. Dr. Saia shared that the Cradle to Career Summit is scheduled for Monday, June 17, 2024.
  - Ms. Harding suggested that an interactive space be set up in the middle schools. Ms. Cook said that the kids need field trips and teaching soft skills will be important. Mr. Thompson Leader commented that our teachers need to learn soft skills, too.

- Mr. Nelson suggested we ask companies for money to fund these ideas. He said we have the second highest student participation at Hersheypark. He said that we need to develop the next workforce and that dollars should follow the pathway.
- Ms. Harding shared that we have students that sew and make their own prom gowns. Ms. Cook said that the African-America Quilting Guild is amazing. Ms. Harding said that parachute riggers need to know how to sew in the military. Ms. Cook mentioned the desire for urban farming at William Penn campus, and Ms. Harding said that there are no students at the Joshua Farm. *Note: After the meeting, Dr. Suski met with Tannon Herman and confirmed that there are John Harris students employed at the Joshua Farm this summer and many who are participating in farm activities as part of The Bridge summer camp.*
- Ms. Cook asked where the Pathways program stands for next year and wants to see what will be implemented in 2024-25. She asked if the District will have a program for juniors next year. Dr. Rossi said that the District is advertising the middle school teaching positions for 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Dr. Saia asked if there is any thought on starting early to have students earn an Associates degree prior to high school graduation. It is already mapped out with HACC.
- Dr. Waters thanked the group for their feedback. Dr. Suski wished everyone a relaxing summer and announced that the first meeting for the 2024-25 school year would be held on Thursday, September 12, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. The agenda will include a discussion on the amendment to the Recovery Plan and academic goal #4.
- The meeting adjourned at 6:03 p.m.