

Harrisburg School District

Act 141 Advisory Committee Meeting

January 9, 2025  
5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Minutes

***In Attendance:***

***Committee Members:*** Autumn Anderson (arrived at 5:40 p.m.), Dr. Sieta Achampong, Jody Barksdale, Melanie Cook, Dr. Marisol Craig, Dr. Ben Henry, Yvonne Hollins, Beth Light, Susan Roth, Eugene Spells, Dr. Lori Suski, Doug Thompson Leader

***Staff Members:*** Melissa Floyd

- Chief Recovery Officer Mrs. Yvonne Hollins opened the meeting by wishing everyone a happy new year!
- Mrs. Hollins welcomed Ms. Melissa Floyd, Director of Virtual Learning as the presenter for the meeting and reviewed the list of presenters for the remainder of the 2024-25 school year.
- Ms. Floyd provided an update on Harrisburg Virtual Learning Academy and explained that she is the Director of Virtual Learning. Ms. Floyd explained that HVLA is a program, not a school, and the concept was conceived post-pandemic as a K-12 solution to compete with cyber charter schools. (See attached presentation PDF).
- Committee members asked various questions related to enrollment, special education support provided within the program, and staffing needs.
- There was discussion regarding the enrollment process and the importance of students remaining in the program for a minimum of 45 days which is the length of a marking period.
- Ms. Floyd discussed the challenges with attendance and indicated that communication with parents is key to the success of a student in HVLA.
- Ms. Barksdale asked if a student is not meeting expectations if they should return to the brick-and-mortar school. This question led to a lengthy discussion about expectations for

student attendance and the concern with promoting students who have not met grade level requirements. Dr. Suski said that the District should not be socially promoting students who are not meeting requirements. Ms. Barksdale said that the administration has challenged that thinking in the past. Dr. Henry stated that we need to have high expectations for students and said that the problem with retention is that many times students experience the same thing the following year. The retention year needs to look different and utilize research-based interventions. Ms. Light emphasized the importance of Student Support Team meetings.

- Mrs. Hollins shared that it tore her heart apart to see HVLA in the basement of the Lincoln building and she had flashbacks to the 1960's. Dr. Henry said that this location has been addressed. Ms. Floyd indicated that the curriculum is designed for in-person learning and the professional development provided is not akin to virtual learning. There is a need for more relevant training for teachers of virtual students.
- Ms. Floyd referenced the 7 C's survey that was recently completed and that the teachers at HVLA had the highest scores of all the District's middle schools. She commented that her staff does a lot of 1:1 conferencing with students and parents. Ms. Cook requested the results of the 7C's surveys for elementary and high school teachers.
- Mrs. Hollins closed the meeting by sharing that the amount of evidence that has been collected in the Recovery Plan monitoring tool has increased from 38 – 52% in October to 72% as of this date in January. She is aiming for 100% by the end of the month.
- The meeting adjourned at 6:12 p.m.