

High School Reform Task Force  
Meeting #1  
November 18, 2005  
9:00 am – 5:00 pm



## SUMMARY OF THE MINUTES

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### Task Force Members in Attendance:

Commissioner John Winn, Rudy Crew, Bill Vogel, Lou Miller, Peg Smith, Nancy Bostock, Stephanie Arma Kraft, James Lawson, Daniel Tosado, Joan Minnis, Cherry Fitch, Rosann Sidener, Judy Marty, Fred Williams, Kathy Corder, Daniel Snyder, David Mosrie, Wayne Blanton, Bob Morris, Sherri Hampton, Melissa Harden, Brenda Speed, Bob Richburg

- The Commissioner called the meeting to order and thanked the student musicians. He recognized Principal Jackie Cornelius.
- Principal Cornelius welcomed the group.
- Task Force members, DOE staff and guests introduced themselves.
- Commissioner Winn updated the Task Force on a presentation to the State board by James Perry, Florida Music Educators Association, regarding the development of a music assessment program for elementary, middle, and high school students.
- Chancellor Yecke explained how public input will work, read the Task Force goals, and reviewed the member notebook.
- It was moved and seconded to approve the goals, and there was a unanimous “yea” vote.
- Chancellor Yecke presented an overview of national and international statistics that prove the need for high school reform.
- It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the November 1 conference call, and there was a unanimous “yea” vote.
- Mary Jane Tappen presented data on Florida’s current academic performance.
- Evan Lefsky presented on Florida reading performance and programs.
- Christine Cothron, President of First Coast Technical Institute presented information on the institute. Noel Ridsdale, Head of the Culinary Academy, shared information before introducing high school student Ashley Hare to give information on her journey into culinary education.
- Jackie Cornelius and staff presented on Douglas Anderson’s data, professional development plan, and best practices. The task force and guests toured the school.
- Mary Jane Tappen presented Florida data related to Goal #1 (Increase the academic achievement levels of high school students), and gave directions to the two Task Force groups.
- Each group brainstormed on strategies for Goal #1, then reported back to the Task Force as a whole. Strategies were ranked by members and the overall top choices were noted.

### Goal #1 Strategies receiving the most votes:

1. More instructional time (day or year)
2. Change the culture through teachers and students
3. More rigor in middle school
4. Leadership team training

5. Technology into remediation, students take ownership

All Strategies for Goal #1:

**Group 1**

Reading-

- Build a strong foundation by having academies for Level 1 and 2 students before 9<sup>th</sup> grade
- Provide money for teachers to get their reading endorsement
- Provide money for smaller reading classes
- Pre-service training for HS reading (right now it's too elementary). Make sure that teachers coming into HS have reading training.
- Lexile measurement
- Progress monitoring of students and classes, regular and research-proven strategies, literacy standards in all content area to ensure teacher ownership.

Teachers-

- Quality PD with rigor
- Time for PD
- More rigorous programs in content area and methods
- Recruit and retain the best and the brightest
- Provide money for teachers whose students make gains
- More instructional support staff

Time-

- Flexibility to be creative
- Longer day
- After school options (mentoring, tutoring)
- Spend less time on "unimportant stuff"
- Longer instructional day/year
- Implementable goals.

Expectations-

- Four years of math and science for all
- More advanced courses (options) in addition to AP and IB
- More rigor in MS
- Rigor/relevance in senior year.
- End of course exams
- Require exams for students.

Foundations-

- Stress the importance of reading, etc. earlier in MS or upper elementary
- Smaller HS or learning communities

9<sup>th</sup> grade-

- Ungraded academy between 8-9 grade

## Leadership-

- Change culture of HS among teachers and students
- Train instructional leaders
- Recruit leaders for schools

## Group 2

- SSS - course specific
- Technology into remediation, allow students to take ownership. Not drill and kill, but hybrid with direct instruction (students-teacher-technology). It's already there but how effectively are we using it? Relevance in the content. Differentiated time options.
- Change the culture/Knowledge is Power Program
- HS, colleges, and business sector contribute to expectations for learning.
- Consistent guidelines-what practices lead to this? Should be more focus, there are too many initiatives.
- Define academic and occupational achievement standards, no school able to do this without strong leadership. Set of skills should be broader than any one exam.
- Leadership training team
- Define what a rigorous standard is?
- Have students understand relationship of earlier decisions (middle school looking forward to future), team approach with parents-counselors-students-teachers, etc. 9<sup>th</sup> grade career path with evaluations and conferencing
- Foundations begin in middle school
- Feeder patterns - rethink transitions from elementary to middle to HS
- Weighted funding for career paths in MS

- Mary Jane Tappen presented Florida data related to Goal #2 (Increase the percent of high school graduates), and gave directions to Task Force groups.

- Each group brainstormed on strategies for Goal #2, then reported back to the Task Force as a whole. Strategies were ranked by members and the overall top choices were noted.

### Goal #2 strategies receiving the most votes:

1. Proficiencies instead of grade levels (4 core courses and 2 electives). Grade level is not dependent on achievement.
2. Guidance program-sensible ratio
3. IEP/Targeted Assistance, personalized plan for all students
4. Smaller learning communities
5. connect students with interests, classes must motivate
6. Align instructional resources

### All Strategies for Goal #2:

## Group 1

#### Incentives/Disincentives-

- Scholarships, certificates
- Driver's License changes
- Compulsory age=18
- Make senior year relevant

#### Choice/Alternatives-

- Non-college bound students look at career academies
- Ways to earn credit
- Day and night courses
- Make it relevant
- Make career academies, school within a school to feel part of a community
- Graduation by credits
- Differentiated diplomas
- Magnet schools
- Credit-based competencies, not seat time
- Funding summer school
- Flexible scheduling

#### Literacy-

- Book Fairs, gets parents in
- Increase number of proficient readers
- Continue to progress monitor

#### Parents/Community-

- More business partnerships, shadowing.
- Involve parents with more outreach, go into community

#### Relationship-

- Change culture
- Improve guidance counselor to student ratio
- Intervention for students at risk
- Give teachers time to be academic advisors

#### **Group 2**

- Proficiency instead of grade level, count number of years, graduate with 6 proficiencies - 4 in core area, 2 selected by students, indicators within proficiencies (gold, silver, bronze) can earn different levels in different proficiencies
- Level of attendance (1,2,3, years) vs. credits
- Relevance
- Core requirements, meet in MS and 9<sup>th</sup> grade before start thinking about career interests
- Exposure to options in MS, meaningful, "light at end of tunnel"
- IEP/Targeted assistance, personalize, students can't get lost in a big HS

- Carrie Fraser reminded Task Force members of the next meeting and reviewed the new High School Task Force website with them.
- Meeting was adjourned.