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# **Leon County Schools Paper Reduction Committee Report**

## **September 1, 2007**

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## **Committee History**

In July 2006, then Superintendent Croteau, in collaboration with school leaders across the district, identified Ms. Cana Nudi, a media specialist at Chiles High School, as the school district's teacher representative to speak on behalf of the district's teachers regarding paperwork and data collection reduction.

In August 2006, a steering committee met to determine how best to approach paper reduction in the district. The committee consisted of Superintendent Croteau, Ms. Nudi, and Barbara Wills, Director of Planning and Policy. The group met to review the report and recommendations of the DOE Paper Reduction Task Force; determine how to best address the DOE charge given to each district to reduce paper and reporting requirements for teachers; and to create a timeline for action.

It was determined that the paper reduction committee would consist of at least one member from each of the following positions; identified according to the volume of paper work they must currently respond to.

- Assistant Principal of Discipline
- Assistant Principal of Curriculum
- ESE Teacher
- Gifted Teacher
- Media Specialist
- Reading Teacher
- Kindergarten Teacher
- Information Systems representative
- Policy and Procedure representative

The planning committee worked with the Leon County Teachers Association, the executive directors of elementary and secondary schools, and the Information Technology and Services Director, to identify committee members. In November 2006, e-mail invitations were sent to these members. The Committee membership was finalized by our new Superintendent, Mr. Pons in May 2007 and the committee began virtual meetings immediately thereafter. Members discussed issues identified by faculty and staff at their respective schools. The goal of this committee is to allow teachers to focus on students and their achievement. Objectives of the committee remain to:

- Solicit input from faculty and staff throughout the district;
- Identify specific reporting and data collection burdens on teachers that require large amounts of paperwork; and
- Identify ways the district can assist teachers in reducing paperwork required by means of technology, changes in policy and procedure, or other solutions.

## **Actions of the Committee**

The committee also discussed the following issues:

- Progress Monitoring – The steering committee discussed methodologies that could be utilized to monitor student achievement and progress without increasing the paper burden on teachers or the district. Special consideration must be given to those that allow time to adjust instruction.
- Discipline Data – The required referral forms, administrative log, card files and other paperwork requirements are a burden to both school administrators and teachers. This was identified as another area of special concern.
- Identification of regulatory requirements at the state and federal level – Specifically, the steering committee discussed what could be done at the district level to consolidate the collection and reporting of data thereby alleviating the weight on teachers and administrators at school sites.
- VPK requirements including support meetings; parent conferences, verification of choice certificates, and others.

The committee also followed through on district efforts being taken to minimize paper requirements. Among these are:

- District Reorganization – Under the leadership of Superintendent Pons, the district has reorganized, making a concerted effort to eliminate elongated chains of command and to stress stronger relationships. This shift mandates direct communication between teachers and principals and between principals and the Superintendent. One of the many benefits of this is a reduction in reports required by the district and by school site administrators.
- Elimination of the Reports Control Committee – This committee previously monitored requests for reports and forms in the district. It was determined that since the district is moving toward a goal of paperwork reduction, the role of that committee would more efficiently be served by the Paper Reduction Committee. Therefore it was ensured that the Paper Reduction Committee included membership from the Office of Technology Information and Services. The Paper Reduction Committee will now incorporate and dissolve the Reports Control Committee.
- Genesis Discipline – An online discipline reporting system that will eliminate paper forms required of the teacher and administrator and logs required at the school site. This system allows the teacher or administrator to make a report online instead of requiring forms of both the teacher and administrator and also eliminates the need for hard copies with signatures and a paper trail.
- Genesis Attendance – An online attendance reporting system that also eliminates paper forms required of teachers and administrators and replaces the logs previously required at a school site. This automated system not only eliminates previously required paper forms but also reduces the amount of time required to collect and report such information since now it is more targeted and distribution is automatic.
- SharePoint – This software is being used district-wide to provide for collaboration and communication services designed to connect people, information, processes, and systems

both within and beyond the organizational firewall. Teachers at some schools in the district have found great success in using this product to communicate with other teachers, administrators and others throughout the district. In addition, it allows them to enhance classroom teaching without additional encumbrances; for example teachers are able to post class readings, assignments, and syllabuses.

- Technology Specialists – Each school in the district now has a technology specialist assigned to their school that instructs teachers on how to integrate technology into teaching and learning. This person is not a technology support person that provides the typical hardware and software support, but is instead a teacher that will work with all teachers to maximize the benefits of technology with the ultimate goals of exposing students and teachers to more technology, reducing the amount of time spent doing paperwork, and allowing teachers more time to focus on technology.
- Paperless School Board Meetings – As a demonstration of the district’s commitment to reduce paperwork, a vendor was recently selected to provide software for the paperless automation of board meetings. This system will allow school board staff, administrators and teachers to provide information for the board meetings and review such material in an electronic environment. No longer will staff have to use valuable financial resources to print and distribute copies of board materials (sometimes hundreds of pages) to staff and board members. Also, this will allow an extension of deadlines for submission of materials, as now time is not required to copy and distribute materials. The district estimates annual savings of approximately \$30,000 in the first year alone.
- Paperless Meeting Structures – The district has also gone paperless in several committee assignments where teachers and school site staff serve. Paper copies are no longer prepared and distributed but instead the information is made available on line ready to view at the committee members’ discretion; saving travel time and other resources. Examples of this include the Reassignment Committee and the Paper Reduction Committee.
- Web-based Library Catalog – The District Media Center and all school media centers have gone to a centralized web- based library catalog called Destiny. Destiny provides the ability to track books and materials throughout the district, even as students and teachers may move from school to school. Media specialists are able to generate electronic reports that transfer from one school to another as well as within the school and can perform once arduous tasks in a very simple manner, such as sending "overdue" notices electronically via e-mail.
- Snapshot – Many secondary schools throughout the district are able to use Snapshot Performance Software for examining test scores. This tool eliminates a lot of paperwork that was previously done at the district level or that was done at the school site but was very work and time intensive for teachers. Snapshot is a student performance data analysis program that extracts, manages, and analyzes student performance data. It returns easy-to-understand reports and graphs that educators can use to make informed

decisions for student achievement and school improvement. It uses up to 5 years of data, enabling educators to identify longitudinal patterns.

The Paper Reduction Committee will meet quarterly throughout the upcoming year and will continue to address issues related to paperwork reduction for teachers and staff.