



District Advisory Council (DAC) 2025-2026

Thursday, December 4th, 2025

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Howell Center, 3955 W. Pensacola Street

Next Meeting: January 8th, 2026

	What	Who	Time	Outcome
1.	Welcome and Introductions	Dr. Michelle Gayle, Deputy Superintendent	10 min	
2.	Welcome from the Superintendent	Rocky Hanna, Superintendent	10 min	
3.	Welcome from the School Board Vice Chair -Darryl Jones	Darryl Jones, School Board Vice Chair	10 min	
4.	Approval of Agenda	Damaris Barrios, Chair	2 min	Vote
5.	Approval of Minutes (November 2025)	Damaris Barrios, Chair	2 min	Vote
6.	LCS Communications: New Website	Chris Petley, Communications Director	15 min	Information
7.	LCS Attendance Presentation: Level Focus Groups facilitated by student leaders/LCS staff (Elementary 1, Elementary 2, Middle, and High)	Dr. Michelle Gayle, Deputy Superintendent Dr. Marsha Sanders, Director LCS Student Attendance Leadership Committee	30 Min	Information/ Discussion
8.	School Choice	Jamie Holleman, Director	10 min	Information
9.	Parent Involvement Group Work by Level	Damaris Barrios, Chair	15 min	Information/ Discussion
10.	Breakout Session: Legislative Priorities	Dr. Michelle Gayle, Deputy Superintendent And Damaris Barrios, Chair	10 min	Information/ Discussion
11.	SAC Questions	Damaris Barrios, Chair		Information
12.	Wrap up on Issue			Information
	Adjourn			

**Please note that one or more Board members may attend this meeting.*



District Advisory Council (DAC)
ESE Advisory Council (ESEAC)
Talented And Gifted Advisory Council (TAG)
Title I Advisory Council (TAC)

Semi-Annual

Collaborative Meeting 2025-2026

Tuesday, November 6, 2025

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

I. Schools/Members Attending: Damaris Barrios (chair Montford), Scott Whittle (Parliamentary/District Staff/SAIL), Jessica Hubbard (ACE-Transitions), Dr. Pam Hightower (Apalachee), Markeyshia Bradley (Astoria Park), Renee Gadsen (Bond), Brittania Davison (Canopy Oaks), Allison Benton (Chaires), Danielle McNeil (Cobb), Allie Merzer Fleming (Chiles), Kimberly Owen (Chiles), Arzu Leushuis (Deer Lake), Nicholas J. Pellito (Desoto Trail), LaShay Gross-McKhan (Early Learning), Dr. Karen Minert (ESE), Cameron Sherridan (Fairview), Cheryl Collier Brown (Fairview/Griffin), Kayce Giglio (GLC), Katie Bennett (Ft. Braden), Sophia Perkins (Hartsfield) John Olson (Hartsfield), Lily Bell (KLES), Dr. Louis Dilbert (LCSB: Dr. Marcus Nicolas), Sandra Alber (Oak Ridge), Jennifer Hirst (Pineview), Madinah Combs (Rickards), Alvin White (Rickards), Andrew Ahshmute (Roberts), Laci Moore (Ruediger), Victoria Burke (Sabal Palm), Susan Jones (Springwood), Desmond Cole (Godby), Dr. Shannon Davis (Woodville), Christina Montgomery (WT Moore), Erica Stetler (Ft. Braden/Family Resource Center), Zellanye Hutchins (Lincoln/Everhart), Chandra Hayes, (Sealey),

Please get in touch with ESEAC, TAG, and TAC for those who were in attendance in their respective councils.

II. District Members/Visitors: Dr Marcus Nicolas (Co-Chair, LCSB), Dr. Michelle Gayle (Deputy Superintendent), Stacey Turknett (PICS), Dr. April Knight (Title I), Ashley Cavallo (Academic Services), Anna Marie Friars (Chiles/Visitor), Beth Young (Ft. Braden/Visitor), Karen Boebinger (Senior Center/Grandparents as Parents), Olunda Bishop (Rickards, Hartsfield, Cobb and Oak Ridge), Anna Marie Friars (Chiles), Joyce Blair- Jordan (GLC), Varissa Dawson (North Florida Christian Academy), Brenetta Lawrence (Bond), Theoria Clark (TAC)

III. Excused Members: Jacquelyn Steele (Vice-Chair/ Conley), Kristy Ward (ACE-Transitions), Linda Edson (Buck Lake), Katie Lyons (Hawks Rise), Heather Daughtry (Ruediger), Glondetra Arnold (Sealey), Jane Floyd-Bullen (Everhart), Katie Crawley (LCVS), Natasha Acoff (Oak Ridge),

IV. Special Guest: Andrea LaBeaud (LCS ESE Department)

V. School Board Greetings by School Board Vice-Chair, Dr. Marcus Nicolas:

Dr. Nicolas welcomed the council members to the Semi-Annual meeting. Dr. Nicolas stated he was truly “impressed” by the turnout.

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He addressed the question raised at the previous meeting by Brittanía Davidson regarding EDEP program funding for the remainder of the year. He confirmed that the 21st Century program will provide the necessary financing, ensuring no interruption in student services. He also announced a community event scheduled at Griffin Middle School on November 15, 2025, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

VI. Welcome from the Superintendent and introduction of the DRAFT calendars for 26-27,27-28, & 28-29 School years

Superintendent Hanna provided an update on the potential government shutdown, noting that Leon County Schools is not currently experiencing any shutdown-related impacts and is not affected in the same way as Head Start. He shared that he recently met with legislators at the Sable Palm community center to highlight the district's programs and services and to emphasize the importance of adequately funding public schools.

Superintendent Hanna reported that early projections indicate school funding for next year will be bleak, resulting in a \$6–\$7 million deficit. The district is capped at an 8% increase under the College Health Plan (CHP), totaling \$3.2 million, while other costs continue to rise. He noted the loss of pandemic relief funds used to support personnel serving students with additional needs.

He discussed concerns about the new Schools of Hope program, explaining that charter schools may be permitted to use available district classroom space at no cost. In contrast, the district remains responsible for maintenance. He asked for support in pushing back against this legislation if the district receives such requests.

Superintendent Hanna also shared the proposed school calendars for the next three years, noting that the final year of this cycle will be his last year as superintendent. The calendars are modeled after the current and previous versions, with an emphasis on meeting the required 900 hours of instruction for full funding. Post-COVID calendars had been set at 175 days; however, an audit of the 2023–2024 school year, which included multiple weather events and allowed seniors to finish a week early, showed insufficient instructional seat time. As a result, the district is moving to a 178-day calendar.

He reported that the food service program is fully funded and that the district is working to place Head Start classrooms within district schools to serve three- and four-year-old children. During his remarks, questions were raised about vouchers, including how voucher funds may be used, the impact of under-enrollment on district schools as students move to private schools with vouchers, and enrollment projections when voucher students return in February. Superintendent Hanna

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expressed concern that, without action, public schools may no longer reflect the communities they serve.

In response to a question about potential cuts to Exceptional Student Education (ESE) services, he explained that ESE services are a federal requirement and that the district is striving to avoid reductions while being forced to do more with less funding. He highlighted the challenges facing para-professionals, noting that many are leaving for comparable pay in retail settings, such as Target, and emphasized that para-professionals are the backbone of schools. He explained that when para-professionals are absent, substitutes are often not provided, leaving students unable to attend special area classes, eat lunch with peers, or go to the playground, which sends the wrong message about the importance of paras in the classroom. The district has requested that the legislature carve out dedicated funding for para-professionals and continues to search for solutions to ongoing substitute shortages.

VII. Approval of Agenda: The November Semi-Annual Collaborative Council agenda was approved.

VIII. Approval of Minutes: The October 2025 minutes were approved.

IX. ESE Presentation: Transitions

Ms. Andrea LaBeaud provided an overview of the district's transition programs, beginning with an introduction to the team and the services they provide. She explained that transition programs prepare students to move from a school environment into vocational, employment, and independent living settings. Transition services are funded under the federal IDEA mandate, which requires transition planning to begin at age 16; however, in Florida, transition planning begins at age 12.

Program Goals and Eligibility:

The primary goals of the transition program include preparing students for postsecondary Education, employment, and independent living. Students served are those with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), and participation in transition programming is determined by the IEP team. Once students earn their high school credits and diploma, they may choose to defer receiving the diploma and enroll in a transition program if additional support is needed.

Ms. LaBeaud shared that Gretchen Everhart High School supports students with higher needs, while Lively Technical College serves students who are ready for employment and community participation. The overall mission is to help students move confidently into independent adult life.

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Instruction and Experiences:

Students learn essential life skills both in the classroom and throughout the community. Instruction includes:

- Health history and self-management
- Budgeting, paying bills, and understanding taxes
- Laundry, cooking, and personal care
- Resume writing and employment readiness
- Using public transportation
- Self-advocacy and goal setting

Students ages 18–22 regularly practice these skills in real-world settings. They learn to ride StarMetro buses, shop for groceries, and navigate community spaces appropriately and independently.

Community Engagement and Opportunities:

Ms. LaBeaud highlighted real-world experiences that build confidence and community connection. Students participate in volunteer work to gain workplace skills, and this year, students visited the Florida Capitol to speak with legislators, personalize their experiences, and advocate for disability inclusion.

She emphasized that “a connected community is a stronger community”. She encouraged local businesses to get involved by offering workplace tours, hiring students, participating in IEP planning conversations, or spreading awareness of the importance of inclusion.

X. (Added) Video Presentation – Madeline Langford, Senior at Chiles High School and ESE Student Council Member:

Madeline Langford, a Senior at Chiles High School, shared a video highlighting the **Comfort in Crisis** program. She explained that comfort kits are now available on all ambulances throughout the county. The project was funded entirely through donations, and the video is also available on YouTube for public viewing.

XI. Title I Presentation

Dr. April Knight, Director of Title I, presented on the purpose and structure of the Title I Federal Grant Program, which is designed to support student achievement. Two service models were highlighted: the schoolwide model and the equitable services model, the latter of which requires funds to follow eligible students enrolled in participating private schools. Notably, funds that go to private schools remain with those schools, even if the students later return to public schools.

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For the 2025–2026 school year, Title I serves:

- 1 public school site that closed
- 1 public charter school
- 18 public schools
- 9 private schools

At least 1% of Title I funds must be used for parent and family engagement, while approximately 80% must be used directly to support students.

Allocation Process:

Allocations are based on:

- Students' ages 5–17 (seniors removed)
- Private school enrollment counts
- FTE Survey 3 plus eligible students

Federal funds are often delayed, and schools may not receive allocations upfront; final allocation of funds typically arrives in January. Staff work to project annual funding needs and ensure comprehensive needs assessments are completed.

Supplemental Services Supported by Title I:

Title I funds support a wide range of supplemental programs, including:

- Foster care transportation
- Homeless education support (with additional funding added this year)
- Tutoring services to reduce strain on school-based budgets
- ESOL classroom materials
- Professional learning for teachers
- Operational costs for the Title I office

This year, the district received an increase of approximately \$20,000; however, the rollover from last year decreased by \$600,000, indicating that the district is fully utilizing available funds. Overall, the district experienced a \$1 million reduction compared to the previous year.

Private schools' roll-forward funds (about \$200,000) must remain designated for private school services. Planning for the 2025–2026 grant began in November, and Florida Vision remains part of the Title I program structure.

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XII. Break-Out Sessions:

- a. **By-Law Committee Reps**
- b. **Parent Engagement Level Discussions**
- c. **DAC Secretary Election**

By Law Committee and Legislative Committee Reps: Contact Stacey Turknett at stacey.turknett@leonschools.net if you are interested in being on one of these committees.

Parent Engagement: Moved to next month

DAC Secretary Election:

Newly elected DAC secretary: Lily Bell (KLES)

XIII. SAC Questions

(None to Date)

XIV. Adjourn: 7:58 PM

Proposed Legislative priorities of the Leon County School Board For submission to FSBA

Accountability and Transparency for all Scholarship Programs:

- Financial transparency—fund scholarships on a quarterly or semester basis. Require that the funding follow the students if they enroll in public school.
- Accountability transparency for private schools receiving funding: List on the DOE website all approved private school applications, including the name of the private school, curriculum offered, qualifications of teachers and staff, the address, the number of students served, the name of the principal/director, and the amount of money received from the state. Create a link where the public can view self-reported test scores and all other reportable data.
- Accountability for home schools receiving state funding: List all approved applications and the number of students served. Provide more accountability and transparency of educational outcomes. Limit reimbursed expenses to explicit and legitimate educational expenses.

Funding Increase:

- Increase the BSA and TISSA.
- Increase Safe Schools Allocation to cover all statutory requirements. Allow Safe School Officers to be paid with Capital Outlay dollars.
- Continued financial support for schools coming out of DA status.

Graduation Requirements:

- Eliminate the requirement of passing the statewide standardized grade 10 ELA assessment and the Algebra 1 EOC for those students enrolled in a CTE Diploma.

Absenteeism:

- Allow districts to initiate intervention process after 10 unexcused absences within the first 30 days. Define absence for elementary, middle and high school students.

Early Learning:

- Provide funding for full time Prekindergarten students who attend pre-k in our traditional public schools.

Career Planning and Advising Process:

- Require the development of a Career and Academic Plan for every student by the end of their freshman year of high school.
- Expand opportunities for students to earn credit through work-based learning experiences guided by career counselors.

Stronger Collaboration within Workforce Ecosystem

- Incentivize partnerships between schools, employers, higher education, and workforce boards to provide mentoring, job-shadowing, curriculum alignment, work-based learning opportunities, and career fairs.

Leon County School District
Attendance Office Data

1st Nine Weeks Average Daily Attendance (ADA)

ADA	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26
PreK	93.29	88.64	92.45	92.37	91.75	91.63	94.91
K	95.02	92.36	93.85	93.93	93.43	93.04	94.00
1	95.63	91.64	94.08	94.63	93.8	93.36	94.77
2	95.74	92.1	94.38	94.57	94.31	93.5	95.12
3	95.96	92.42	94.49	95.03	94.63	93.64	95.04
4	96.08	92.73	94.32	95.3	94.46	93.79	95.22
5	95.9	92.71	94.09	94.85	94.42	93.91	95.58
6	95.09	86.29	92.88	93.27	93.55	93.11	94.64
7	94.8	85.59	91.83	92.71	92.34	91.85	93.39
8	94.66	87.22	91.7	92.39	92.72	92.22	93.81
9	94.39	88.17	90.73	90.89	91.58	91.48	92.6
10	93.62	90.7	91.	91.85	91.02	90.47	92.3
11	93.2	90.39	90.26	90.93	91.29	89.95	90.86
12	92.97	91.52	91.36	91.78	91.84	90.87	90.89
Total	94.96	90.49	92.88	93.24	93.15	92.5	93.82

1st Nine Weeks Chronically Absent (CA)

CA	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26
PreK	20.76	33.04	31.62	24.28	33.15	24.38	16.53
K	14.35	24.01	25.06	18.73	25.85	20.28	18.35
1	11.08	23.54	23.78	15.5	24.54	19.25	15.4
2	11.22	22.91	21.77	16.62	22.06	18.59	13.55
3	10.25	22.6	21.31	14.34	19.73	17.36	13.43
4	9.75	21.66	22.	12.09	19.68	17.37	13.01
5	10.63	21.55	22.46	15.05	20.62	16.79	11.75
6	13.75	35.28	27.35	19.73	24.05	19.42	16.6
7	14.37	35.73	29.89	20.99	28.91	24.77	19.6
8	14.98	32.65	30.08	23.09	27.53	22.76	18.98
9	15.57	31.42	33.95	25.85	31.02	24.96	20.87
10	18.07	28.9	31.82	23.76	32.49	29.16	24.27
11	19.5	27.9	35.47	26.79	31.61	31.6	30.1
12	22.77	26.96	33.03	25.98	33.17	29.45	30.83
Total	14.05	26.66	26.92	19.88	25.83	22.12	18.73

01.20.20 First confirmed case of COVID-19 in the United States

03.13.20 President declares a national emergency in response to COVID-19

03.19.20 – California became the first state to issue a statewide stay-at-home order

04.01.20 Florida issues a stay at home order

Why Attendance Matters

Consistent school attendance is key to your child's academic success.

Students who attend regularly:

- ✓ Achieve higher grades
- ✓ Build stronger social and emotional skills
- ✓ Are more likely to graduate on time

Reporting an Absence

To report your child's absence:

1. Call the school attendance office or use the designated reporting system.
2. Provide your child's name, teacher; grade, date of absence, and reason
3. Send any required documentation (doctor's note, court letter, etc.)

Absences should be reported with 48 hours!

Average Daily Attendance

Total ADA is the total days of student attendance divided by the total days of instruction in the regular school year.

Chronic Absenteeism

A student is considered chronically absent when they miss 10% or more of a school year, regardless of whether they are excused or unexcused.

Types of Absences

✓ Excused Absences

These may include:

- Illness or medical appointments
- Family emergencies
- Religious holidays
- Required court appearances
- Approved school activities

✓ Unexcused Absences

These include:

- Missing school without a valid reason
- Oversleeping
- Family trips not approved in advance
- Transportation issues that are not documented

How You Can Help

- ✓ Establish a consistent morning and bedtime routine
- ✓ Prepare clothes, backpacks, and materials the night before
- ✓ Keep open communication with teachers and the school
- ✓ Schedule trips and appointments outside school hours
- ✓ Reach out for assistance if barriers arise (transportation, health, etc.)

Source: Attendance Works

We're Here to Support You!

Marsha Glover Sanders, Ph.D.

Director of Student Services - Attendance, FIT, and Foster Care
Office of Professional, Intervention, and Community Services
850-561-8376

Parent Focus Group Questions — Student Attendance (12.04.25)

- 1. What factors make it difficult for students to attend school regularly (e.g., health, transportation, safety, housing, family responsibilities)?**
- 2. Which supports or changes from the school would help improve student attendance (e.g., flexible start times, attendance communication, mental-health resources, transportation assistance)?**
- 3. What is the best way for the school to communicate about attendance concerns and available supports (channels, tone, frequency), and what would make those messages more helpful or actionable?**
- 4. Anything else that you want to share with us regarding attendance?**

Elementary School

Spring Carnival, Donuts with Grown-Ups, Student Art Show, Family Game Night, Science Night (themed), Grandparents Breakfast, School Pageant, Sweetheart Dance, Award Ceremony Night (Testing Awards), Daddy/Daughter Dance, STEM Night, Parent University (Year Long), Trunk or Treat,

Elementary School Cont.

Parent & Student Movie Night, Mom and Son Pumpkin Carving, Veterans Day Parade, Bring a Veteran to School, Mystery Reader (Kindergarten), DOJO App, Career Day, Curriculum Night, Fall Festival, ESOL Family Night, Santa Night,

Elementary School Cont.

Mother & Son All-Star game, Reading Academy (Saturdays), Literacy Night, Homework workshops, Glow Bash, Valentine's Dance-a-thon, STEAM Night, Reindeer Run, Bingo for books, Lunch Bunch (parents volunteer for lunch duty),

Middle School

FOCUS communication, Clubs with guest speakers, Career & Curriculum Night, Book Fair, Back to Basics: What is working, FAQ and survey, Canvas Viewer, Take Your Adult to School, Math Bingo Nights, PBIS Parents -- Parents give points through FOCUS for good behavior

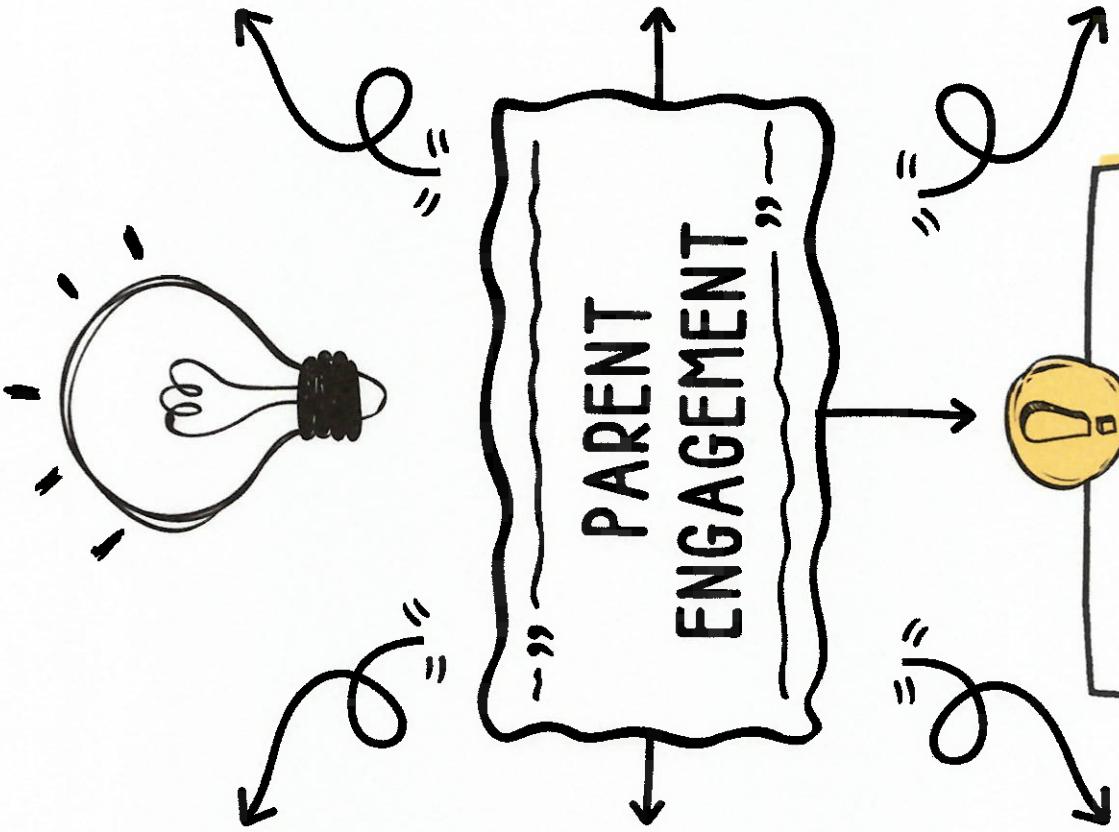
Middle School Cont.

Weekly email from admin, Summer Orientation for Parents, Volunteer @elective classes, Surveys - used for feedback, International Heritage Day Gathering, DIY Holiday Store

High School

Parent Hub, Tutoring Services, Parent Technology Nights, Book Clubs, Spaghetti Dinners for Freshmen, Theatre & Arts Performances, Murder Mystery Dinner, Fall festival, Tutoring Services,

PARENT ENGAGEMENT



All schools could benefit from utilizing Remind, Peach Jar (Call to Action), Newsletters, and ZOOM PTO/PTSO meetings

ELEMENTARY IDEAS

- Donuts for Grown-Ups
- Muffins for Moms
- Grandparents Day
- Family Movie/Game Night
- Literacy/Math Night

PARENT ENGAGEMENT



MIDDLE SCHOOL IDEAS

- Pizza Friday
- Weekly Newsletter
- Take your Adult to School Day
- Back to Basics Night
- Clubs with guest speakers

ELEMENTARY IDEAS CONT.

- Senior Visits
- Friendsgiving
- All Pro Dads
- Fall Festival/Valentine's Dance
- Trunk or Treat

ELEMENTARY IDEAS CONT.

- Conference Night with Dinner
- Lunch Bunch
- E-Store Volunteer
- Food Events
- Fun Run

ALL SCHOOLS

- Social Media Engagement
- Remind
- SAC
- Newsletters
- PTO/PTSO Meetings

HIGH SCHOOL IDEAS CONT.

- Title I Survey
- Open house
- Booster Groups
- SNAP Chat

HIGH SCHOOL IDEAS

- Curriculum Fair
- Climate Survey
- Tutoring Services
- Orientation
- Class Nights