

Gilchrist School

Advisory Council (SAC)

Meeting Minutes

December 7, 2021 at 6:00pm

Members & Guests Attending: Michelle Adams, Alyene Calvo, Scotty Crowe, Johanna Gavilanez, Lynn Hatchett, Bridgette Rankin, Anna Ross, Jennifer Weaver, Rebekah Weldon, Dawn Wilder, Rosie Wyatt, Victoria Bradshaw, Wanda Brown, Sha Maddox, Christopher York, Jihye Sung, Jessica Ervin-Hang, Travis Morris, Candace Morris

I. SAC Welcome —Rosie Wyatt

- a. Opening message and welcome shared – welcoming all guests from PTO, this is our first hybrid meeting
- b. Discussion on rules for voting in new board members – only SAC members can vote, only parent members can vote on new parents, etc.
- c. Voting held for new members:
 - i. Alyene Calvo: all parent members in favor, none opposed
 - ii. Jihye Sung: all parent members in favor, none opposed
 - iii. Jennifer Weaver: all parent members in favor, none opposed
- d. For any individuals wanting to become a SAC member, please email Alyene Calvo for the form and the board will vote at the next meeting.
- e. Formal thank you from Mr. Crowe to members of the SAC for their commitment to volunteering, which is a strength of Gilchrist.

II. Approval of the 9/14 Meeting Minutes — Alyene Calvo

- a. All members in favor of approving the meeting minutes, none opposed
- b. Formal thank you from Scotty Crowe to Alyene Calvo for the meeting minutes. They are amazing and it is hard to get someone to take that role – it is much appreciated.

III. Recognition of Wanda Brown – Scotty Crowe

- i. Wanda Brown, who has been a teacher at Gilchrist for 34 years, will be retiring this year. She is an amazing person and has meant so much to the Gilchrist Community. She has made an impact on thousands of students, including Mr. Crowe's own children.
- ii. Mr. Crowe would like to dedicate the music suite to Ms. Brown as a small way to say thank you for what she has meant to this school.
- iii. The naming process is formal and must be voted on, first, by the SAC, then the school board, and then a formal naming ceremony will happen in the spring.
- iv. SAC board voting: All in favor. None opposed. Vote passes and the next step will be to take the suggestion to the school board.
- v. Ms. Brown stated that she is honored and wants to thank Mr. Crowe. She loves the kids and just loves doing her job, is not in it for the accolades.

IV. PTO President's Message—Rebekah Weldon

- a. Combined SAC/PTO meeting:
 - i. Very thankful to have this combined meeting – Ms. Weldon has been wanting to have a more accessible PTO meeting and involve more parents through the SAC meeting because not a lot of parents know about it.

- ii. Between the SAC and PTO, we complete the circle between the school, the district, and the parents. Parents can get involved in both.
- b. Activities this past 9 weeks: we are thankful for all of the parents that volunteered! We are thankful for having parents back on campus and are thankful for all of the support they've shown to the school and to the PTO.
 - i. Boosterthon - Had a very successful start to the year. Despite setbacks due to COVID, we had a very successful Boosterthon. 5th grades got to run the color run.
 - ii. In-person book fair was a success
 - iii. Soup and Chowder luncheon was back
 - iv. Cookie Exchange was another favorite
 - v. Field trips resumed – the kids were very excited about these!
 - vi. Second AR celebration
- c. Upcoming activities for next 9 weeks:
 - i. Starting the new year with Donuts with Grownups and the Sweetheart Soiree.
- d. Allocations to date:
 - i. Installed much needed shade structure
 - ii. Updated school sign and sound system, both of which were outdated
 - iii. Provided durable seating benches in multiple areas
 - iv. Funded 3 afterschool STEAM clubs for 4th and 5th grades which were very popular
- e. Waiting listed items for future funds:
 - i. Hope to fund more STEAM clubs, in addition to the current 3
 - ii. Updating the PBIS program
 - iii. New news production equipment for the library
 - iv. Hope to respond to classroom technology needs in the 3rd grade hall
 - v. Looking at the outside dining area – want to make it more user friendly so people can eat outside.
- f. In January, the board will be making several amendments to the PTO bylaws to include virtual meetings and holding board meetings later in the year for transition.
- g. We will have a PTO shirt this year for volunteers. We encourage parents to reach out for volunteering efforts, even if your child's teacher does not have a need. We always need reading buddies. The last year and a half has been difficult because our teachers had to manage the entire classroom so they struggle to do the extras. If you have an interest, please contact Anna or Victoria. They can reach out to teachers that are not your regular teacher to find areas where you can help.
- h. Message from Mr. Crowe – Thank you for your leadership. It's great to see volunteers at school for the in-person book fair, for the luncheon, etc. One of the fundamental strengths of Gilchrist is parent involvement. PTO does a great job of bridging those areas where we may not have funding or manpower. PTO helps us do things we cannot do on our own.

V. DAC Report —

- a. Ms. Smith had a conflict but sent out the minutes. She will combine those into her next report. Any questions about the minutes or the initiatives from the District, please email Ms. Patterson or Ms. Smith.
- b. We appreciate Ms. Smith volunteering to be our DAC representative!

VI. Gilchrist Spotlight – STEAM —Victoria Bradshaw

- a. With COVID restrictions, we have brainstormed different ways to have STEAM projects, stay safe, and get the whole family involved. We came up with bringing back the STEAM Carnival.
 - i. Hope to have it March 5th
 - ii. Want to make it a whole family event on a Saturday from 11-2pm

- iii. Grades will have booths, class teams can put together booths around campus. We will have a map and everyone can go around and attend the activities (i.e. LEGO challenge, mag lab presentation, hands-on activities, art, etc.).
- iv. Leverage community partners (i.e. Mag Lab, C to C, Challenger Learning Center, etc.) and families that have activities to share. WE will reach out to school and business sponsors to sponsor booths.
- v. We could include an event like Touch a Truck for the Kindergarteners.
- b. Comments/Questions:
 - i. Mr. Crowe: This is a great opportunity for us to be able to open our school back up to the community and partner with them. If anyone has any additional ideas, please reach out to Ms. Bradshaw.
 - ii. Ms. Weldon: PTO has lots of décor.
 - iii. Mr. & Ms. Morris suggestions:
 - 1. High schoolers are looking for volunteering hours for community service.
 - 2. With food trucks, we will need to consider regulatory aspects of food service.
 - iv. Ms. Wilder: We want to thank Ms. Bradshaw for her hard work – she always does a great job! Thank you for doing this for our students and school!

VII. Progress Monitoring — Anna Ross

- a. SIP:
 - i. Students will come home with STAR and iReady progress reports.
 - ii. Tests run through January 14-21 but teachers have discretion to make windows longer to meet the needs of our students (IEPs, etc.). We are looking forward to seeing the results.
 - iii. For this period, these are the scores where we meet with teachers and make predictions for testing. We have data chats monthly to make sure they are getting the accommodations they need.
- b. BEST Standards:
 - i. K-2 teachers are implementing the BEST standards. We will be training teachers on implementing these standards for students next year.
 - ii. The biggest shift is not in WHAT we are teaching, but in HOW we teach them – using thematic units (ecosystems, etc.). Activating background knowledge – based in science of reading and how background knowledge of a subject applies. We are working on a very strong base for the students. In the past, we accelerated quickly, not fine-tuning skills before moving on to the next level; however, that will shift with thematic units. It will give teachers more time.
 - iii. 3-5 teachers will see more thematic units.
 - iv. Numbers are staggeringly low of the percent of proficient 4th graders in Florida.
 - v. Discussion on other methods reviewed.
 - vi. For the new method, teacher feedback is due by December 13th, then there will be a public review where parents will get to review the materials. We want to make sure everyone is represented by our materials so we highly encourage parents to participate.
- c. Comments/Questions:
 - i. Ms. Weldon: are teachers excited? Does Leon County have their numbers?
 - 1. Yes, they are excited and invigorated. The numbers are in the SIP.
 - ii. Ms. Morris: Do we look at the other states that have top performing readers to see what they're doing?
 - 1. We do not but that is a great idea. A lot of the materials we pulled were from West Virginia, Virginia, etc.
 - iii. Mr. Crowe: These are Florida standards. A lot of states use Common Core, where Florida uses our own standards. Now we are migrating to BEST. We want to thank Anna because it is a big shift.

Over the next 6-8 months, it will be a big shift for teachers to move children from one set of standards to another. These go back to traditional standards and parents will embrace that. We are moving away from the 1-time test (FSA) to more of a progress monitoring model (baseline, middle, end) – we do that ongoing anyway. Parents may like this better because they will get more, better, real-time information on how their child is progressing. Mr. Crowe would like to bring more updates on where the kids are midyear at the January SAC meeting.

- iv. Ms. Morris: Are there curriculums that skew to the world economy? We appreciate that Florida is different but how are we working across the world? As a parent, I would like to look at the data from the national percentiles.
 - 1. It is norm-based on the U.S. It gives you a national percentile, more of a comparison/ranking on how we look against other states. Florida is compared against Florida. ACT/SAT are national and internationally normed.

II. Other Areas of School Improvement

a. COVID Protocols—Rosie Wyatt

- i. Most recent changes are big. The district alerted us at the beginning of December on changes that are coming based on the positivity rate being way down. Leon County is a little over 2%, Leon County Schools was 1.6% positivity rate.
- ii. With the passing of the House Bill, the district pivoted. Highlights:
 - 1. Masks are optional for everyone
 - 2. Quarantine: only people that have to quarantine are the ones that test positive.
 - 3. We are no longer contact tracing so we do not have to quarantine people that may have been exposed.
 - 4. Positive cases are only provided on the County's dashboard. Ms. Wyatt's emails go directly to the county, rather than out to the school Listserv. The county has all the real-time information on positive cases.
- iii. Other changes on the horizon:
 - 1. Will possibly resume assemblies. For the Winter program, Ms. Brown videotaped. We are looking at resuming live performances, school events, Black History Program, etc.
- iv. Visitors and volunteers are back on campus but only for purposeful visits, which couples with our school safety program. We want to provide a safe environment so people must have a reason to be on campus. Visitors will continue to be buzzed through the front office.
- v. We will never go all the way back. We will continue to encourage handwashing, not sharing objects, etc.
- vi. Ms. Crowe thoughts: Thank you to Rosie for being our COVID expert – she has helped us navigate for a year and a half and it continues to evolve. She has really helped us figure out as we go – THANK YOU!

b. School Safety— Scotty Crowe

- i. Ms. Mitchell our Dean had a family emergency
- ii. With events that took place in Michigan, Mr. Crowe has asked Ms. Steverson to bring an update to us at the January SAC meeting. We will get an update on what's going on with the Florida requirements and laws for school safety, and what that means for us at Gilchrist.
- iii. We can never say that a school is 100% safe but safety and security are our #1 focus. We can always improve so we will bring that forward in the January meeting to talk about what the school system is doing with the new requirements. We have locked door standards which are not COVID related. We have to give up on certain things to maintain a safe environment. There are things that parents see but also things we are doing in the background.

III. Final questions/comments

- a. Mr. Crowe: Excited about parent involvement and opening back up. We are excited about the Winter concert – the kids did a great job! Hopefully the Spring Concert will be in person. We are very proud of our school and the accomplishments that we continue to make. We continue to be a high-performing school, in spite of the challenges we have all faced. Thank you to our new SAC members and for attending our first hybrid SAC/PTO meeting. We cannot wait to take Ms. Wanda Brown to the School Board!
- b. Meeting closed at 7:10pm