

08 25 2015 Special Work Session 10 00 AM

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A. New Business

1. [10:00-10:10 School Board Comments](#)

Minutes:

B. Board Agenda Review

C. Information

D. Discussion

Item 2

2. [10:10-11:10 AM Charter School Data](#)

Minutes:

Superintendent LeRoy discussed the recent efforts to determine specific attrition rates in magnet and choice programs. She then shared the floor with Heather Wright, Senior Director of Assessment, Accountability and Evaluation, and Chunhua Cao, Senior Coordinator in Assessment and Accountability. Various demographic areas were addressed based on factors such as race, free or reduced lunch status and financial status. Correlations were studied between the length of stay and departure.

Students who scored a level 2 on the statewide standardized test, students who received a free or reduced-price lunch, and black students left charter

elementary schools at a statistically significant higher rate than other students.

Students who scored level 1 or 2, students who received free or reduced-price lunch, and black students left charter middle schools at a statistically significant higher rate than others

Students who scored a level 1 or 2 and students who received free or reduced-price lunch left charter high schools at a statistically significant higher rate than others. The difference among withdrawal rates for students of different ethnicities was not statistically significant.

International Baccalaureate Programs (IB) and Advanced International Certificate of Education programs (AICE) trend data was also discussed. High School information was limited in this analyses due to a small number of charter schools at that grade level, therefore it was compared to IB schools. The School Board Members and Superintendent LeRoy were in agreement that the increased rigor in these programs is not suited for all students and the shock often hinders success. Superintendent LeRoy also pointed out that the appropriate safety nets need to be in place for the lower performing students in these programs. Some additional points discussed by Superintendent LeRoy were: the decrease in our dropout rate of 46%, our significant improvement in trend data, and the need to improve student participation in our summer programs.

Mrs. Cunningham said these statistics would help her to see if trends in the data are specific to Polk's charter schools only and wondered if the high migrant population had any effect on the data. Mr. Mullenax felt that it is too early to make a definitive statement about all the data.

Item 3

3. [11:10 AM-12:00 PM High School Issues](#)

Attachment: [Master Bell Schedule 2015-16 \(2\).pdf](#)

Attachment: [ACT to date 8 11 15 WS.pdf](#)

Minutes:

Superintendent LeRoy previously asked the School Board to discuss the subject of Certificates of Completion and the determination of whether those students should walk the stage with diploma graduates. Mr. Berryman, Mrs. Sellers and Mr. Wilson questioned whether that sends the right message to students and to the community about their expectations. A Certificate of Completion is given to students who took all the courses they needed but did not meet the requirements for a High School Diploma. Mrs. Cunningham felt that, for the students in question, it is important for them to walk the stage and for some the only thing lacking is a one-time test that they have failed. She also wondered if we knew approximately how many students were typically in this category. Superintendent LeRoy's response was that last school year there were about 300. Mr. Mullenax stated he is not in favor of any change in current policy. He feels that telling students that they will not be able to walk the stage will encourage dropouts. Mr. Wilson discussed lobbying legislators to

reinstate special diplomas. Superintendent LeRoy expressed that efforts are being made to follow up and try to ensure graduation follows for the students in question and that we are making it a priority to pursue students to complete ACT.

In a previous work session, it was agreed that high school uniform policies would be addressed at this meeting. Mr. Berryman asked that staff provide information on other districts who are observing uniforms in schools. Mrs. Fields shared that based on some attire she witnessed on the first day of school, our dress codes should be more closely monitored or become stricter. However, uniforms in high schools has not been supported by enough principals in the past. Mr. Mullenax agreed that a more rigorous dress code policy should be adopted county wide and that administration should support principals when calls begin coming in from community members and parents. Mrs. Cunningham requested that data be pulled from Lake Wales High School since discipline infractions decreased when uniforms were integrated. C. Wesley Bridges, Legal Counsel for the Polk County School Board, expressed that when the requested information is gathered the actual dress code policies from those districts should be looked at closely to determine the interpretation of what is a "uniform".

Another subject brought forward at a previous work session was high school start times. Arguments the Board has heard against changing the start time include:

- It is not cost effective.
- It would interfere with after school athletics programs.
- It would reduce the amount of hours available for after-school employment.
- It would cause transportation hardships.

Mrs. Sellers and Mr. Harris supported the later start times because it would benefit the students and felt the District could find a cost effective way to change the schedules. Mrs. LeRoy agreed to gather the data on school start times.

E. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 11:54 AM. Minutes were approved and attested this 6th day of October 2015.

Dick Mullenax, Board Chair

Kathryn M. LeRoy, Superintendent