

Fairhope Public Schools Commission
March 4, 2020

Members present: Robert Brown, Tanya Bosarge, Ken Cole, Danielle Mashburn-Myrick, Carrie McLemore, Hill Robinson, Miranda Schrubbe, Cornelius Woods

Member absent: Robin Coleman

Baldwin County Public Schools: Renee Carter, Karen Dyess, Tom Hartner
Coordinator

Principals present: Jon Cardwell, Patrice Wolfe, Lynn Smith

Guest: Joe Kelly

Ken Cole opened the meeting, welcoming members and guests. A motion was made and passed to approve the minutes of the February 5th meeting of the commission.

Guests from Baldwin County Public Schools – Renee Carter, Karen Dyess, and Tom Hartner – were introduced. They were invited to attend this meeting of the FPSC to provide information about the school system’s efforts in support of academics and maintaining the focus on Baldwin County’s goal to have “Academics Lead.”

The Dean of Academics, Renee Carter, reviewed the district wide report card grades over the last 4 years, showing improvements over that period. Improvements correlate with the implementation of the “Four-Part Plan,” which provides for curriculum leaders in all schools, a district wide literacy program known as “guided reading,” use of data analytics to guide teaching and intervention, and expansion of eMints training for teachers.

Elementary Curriculum Coordinator Karen Dyess shared that there is a common vision across the elementary grades, and that some keys to success at this level have been differentiated instruction, guided reading, and professional learning for teachers. There was discussion about the difficulty comparing state report card “grades” from year to year since the assessments have changed frequently in recent years at the elementary level. Ms. Dyess suggested ways the commission could assist the elementary grades are with funding for: personnel to support RTI (intervention) efforts, STEM-based materials, Guided Reading training/materials, professional development opportunities, and school-based projects

Secondary Curriculum Coordinator Tom Hartner reviewed data trends for Fairhope High School, going back to the 2014-2015 school year to show college readiness benchmarks and ACT scores. He also showed improvement in graduation rates and lower absenteeism from 2017 to 2019 at Fairhope High. Data for Fairhope Middle School shows lower absenteeism and improved academic achievement over the same period. Commission members indicated the need to see these numbers alongside the numbers for the best-ranked schools in the state rather than the state averages, as the aim for Fairhope schools is to compete with the most well resourced schools in Alabama. Mr. Hartner shared information about a wide range of resources and approaches being used to support students of all abilities, including

intervention, secondary guided reading, AP and IB courses, as well as future plans for enhanced career tech offerings at a new school being planned by the county.

In conclusion, Ms. Carter stressed the value of partnering to make sure struggling AND high-performing students are getting what they need. She and her colleagues will return as needed to address additional questions and concerns.

Principals in attendance were asked to start working on funding requests before the commission's next meeting. Ms. Wolfe reported that the principals would be meeting soon to identify common threads in the needs of their respective schools.

The next meeting of the FPSC will be on April 1st at 4:30.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:45.

Respectfully submitted by Miranda Schrubbe