

**Fort Myers Technical College  
School Advisory Council  
Minutes of Meeting Held February 16, 2016**

The meeting was called to order at 7:37 am. Attending: Ron Andersen; Dr. Brian Byrnes; Dr. Dante Ciolfi; Dianne Fabii; Nona Gronau; Suzan Harden; Sam Lawton (FMTC Student Rep); Tessa LeSage; Bill McCormick; Tyler Patak; Ron Pentiuk; Rich Stevenson.

The minutes of the November 18 meeting were approved as presented.

**DAC Update – Dr. Dante Ciolfi**

At the last meeting, Ms. Gronau asked how much class time is spent on test preparation. Dr. Richard Itzen, Director, Dep't. of Research and Assessment, addressed this question and stated that theoretically, all time in courses is devoted to test preparation. There are times, though, when infrastructure trials are done and practice exams are given to show students how to use the computers to proceed through the exams.

Robert Morgan, Director of Transportation Services, addressed DAC to share some of their concerns. Lee County's transportation system is one of the largest in the country. The Department is faced with many challenges in retaining personnel. The new superintendent has approved some incentives to encourage people to apply for driving positions.

Board Member Teuber and Superintendent Adkins are currently working on the adoption of Lee County Standards of Excellence. Anyone can participate in this process. The first step is "Staging"—bids are submitted. The second step is "Review"—a rubric is applied to the standards to be sure all state standards are followed. The third step in the process is "Approval."

Tyler Patak asked how often curriculum is reviewed. Our curriculum review is on-going. One of the functions of the Program Advisory Committees is to recommend updates to curriculum. Those revisions are made immediately or as time/financial resources allow.

**Career Services Website/Career Fair – Michele Witlin, Career Specialist**

In Michele's absence, Mr. McCormick addressed briefly the new CollegeCentral.com website on which employers can post job opportunities and students can post resumes. Tessa asked how employers can become involved in this process. Michele will be asked to present at the April meeting.

**Director's Update – Bill McCormick**

Last week FACTE (Florida Association for Career-Technical Education) hosted "CT on the Hill." The purpose of the event is to share with legislators the successes of Florida tech centers/colleges and to focus on issues involved in continuing to provide quality workforce education. Governor Scott was pushing his "Ready, Set, Work" initiative. Various tech centers/colleges set up displays in the rotunda. Approximately 300 to 400 people attended. Mr. McCormick spoke to both Rep. Dane Eagle and Sen. Lizbeth Benaquisto.

Ms. Benaquisto indicated to Mr. McCormick that she is not in favor of the technical centers changing their names to technical colleges. Mr. Stevenson asked why she is not in favor. Mr. McCormick says her objections are both philosophical and financial. Ron Pentiuk reminded us that his concerns since the

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name changes were proposed is that we would lose sight of our long-time mission of training people to go to work.

Governor Scott asked again for an additional appropriation of \$20 million for career tech programs throughout Florida. On the House side, the bill made it out of committee with a recommendation of \$10 million. The bright side of this is that it would be recurring funds.

The Senate recommended \$20 million. However, the senate version would make the funds accessible to anyone who provides technical training, including private and for-profit schools.

The statewide appropriation for workforce funding is approximately \$360 million. Some of our priorities here are to expand the Welding program, update and expand the AST facilities, and to update and expand the Marine Service Technology program.

Mr. McCormick presented the results of a survey FutureMakers conducted entitled “What do Southwest Floridians think about technical education?” The results indicate that parents are agreeable to sending their children to technical school; moms are more agreeable to technical education overall; young women view technical education more favorably; young men are slightly more willing to say they will go to a technical school. Complete results can be found in the handout distributed at the meeting. Tessa said that the most urgent issue they are facing right now is that funds from the Lumina Foundation must be spent by the end of the year. They are determining how to use the funds.

Ron said that counselors’ perceptions need work. We have been conducting a workshop for high school counselors every other year. Next year will be the year for that presentation. Dianne mentioned that counselors’ workloads cause them to have limited time to spend on things outside their daily responsibilities.

Our new career specialist, Michele Witlin, has done a very good job of establishing connections with the high schools. FMTC has been represented at most of the college fairs conducted this year, and she has been making presentations in high school classes as well. We are making some progress, as our high school dual enrollment numbers are up to 22 for the spring semester versus 5 for the fall semester.

Sam Lawton stated that there is intense pressure to go right to college. He believes an outreach to parents may be beneficial.

Mr. McCormick mentioned a new partnership between Lee Memorial Health System, FutureMakers, SW Florida Community Foundation, CareerSource SW Florida, FMTC, and CCTC to train CNA’s. Lee Memorial has approximately 100 openings they are trying to fill. Initial response to the initiative has been good. There is an article related to this partnership in today’s NEWS-PRESS.

Another partnership to encourage business in Fort Myers is LEARN—Lee Entrepreneurs Assistance Resource Network. Their purpose is to promote the establishment, retention, and expansion of business in SWFL.

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**Director's Update (cont'd.)**

The United Church Women's Fellowship has awarded scholarships to three FMTC students: Marion Bustos (LPN); Murquita Goodman (Adm. Off. Specialist); and Wendy Paz (Cosmo). Sandy Shimp and Odette Dodier will be attending the luncheon when the scholarships are awarded.

We appreciate the generosity of some of our community supporters. Lincoln Electric made a donation of \$29,000 to assist with the equipping of our new state-of-the-art Welding lab. United Mechanics, Inc., donated two large computer room AC units to cool rows of computers.

Several of our HOSA (Health Occupations Students of America) and SkillsUSA students have competed successfully at regional competitions.

Right now we are expecting four teacher retirements at the end of this year: Gary Christiano (Drafting); Ron Ellis (AST); Steve Friebe (Technology Specialist); and Mike Remy (Welding).

**Dr. Brian Byrnes, Ass't. Director, Curriculum**

Dr. Byrnes distributed a summary sheet of our students' accomplishments in the AAAE center. The number of students being served has dropped since 1008.30 F.S. went into effect. This is the state statute which exempts students who have graduated with a standard diploma from a Florida public high school since 2007 from having to take the TABE for any but the limited access programs (Air Conditioning; AST; Practical Nursing; TGM).

The GED course on our campus is full—60 students. The GED classes are run by the Department of Adult and Career Education and are located in L Building.

Good news from the Nursing Department. We have had 100 percent pass rate on the NCLEX for the last two classes. Our pass rate has consistently been greater than 90 percent.

A representative from Florida SouthWestern State College came to talk with students about the Florida Xcel-IT Program. Xcel-IT is a federally-funded program designed to expand opportunities for unemployed, underemployed, or displaced workers in our area. Funding for this program comes through the Labor Department's Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training grant.

The purpose of the Xcel-IT program is to train people for IT-based careers in the fast-growing areas of Information Technology, Logistics and Distribution, and Small Business Development. CareerSource SWFL is also a partner in this program, providing funding for interested and eligible students. This program is not eligible for the Pell Grant. Approximately 25 students attended. Students who complete the program will earn 24 CCC's (college credit certificates) in Small Business Management.

Dr. Rawe has assembled an impressive Program Advisory Committee for the Applied Cybersecurity program. These prospective employers are very eager to see this program succeed.

With Gary Christiano's retirement at the end of this semester, the Drafting program will be closed.

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**Dr. Brian Byrnes, Ass't. Director, Curriculum (Cont'd.)**

Two PSAV programs will be added next year. The first is Technology Support Services, which will be taught in conjunction with Applied Cybersecurity by Dr. Rawe. This program will prepare students to sit for the A+ certification, which Dr. Rawe says would be excellent preparation for the Applied Cybersecurity program.

The other addition is Mechatronic Technology, which will be taught in conjunction with the Electronic Technology program by Ernie White. Mechatronic Technology will give students an opportunity to learn more about robotic technology.

**George McDaniel, Ass't. Director, Operations and Finance**

Enrollment in the evening programs is as follows: Air Conditioning, 16; Major Appliance Repair, 10; Auto Mechanics, 10; Nursing Assistant, 12; Pilot Ground School, 6; Welding, 11.

Mr. McDaniel offered his congratulations to FMTC's finance staff, Jessica Feliciano and Kristen Ralston. The district's annual budget review was just conducted, and there were zero findings.

The financial aid department has awarded \$1 million in Pell Grant funds so far this year. Ms. Shimp planned to make a presentation to us today but asked to be rescheduled for the April meeting.

**Good of the Order**

Sam Lawton, the FMTC student representative, has asked that pricing in the cafeteria be reviewed. Many of his peers say that the prices are too high for them. Mr. McCormick said the administrators will take a look at it.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, April 20, at 7:30 a.m. SAC members are invited to FMTC's graduation to be held on Thursday, May 26, at 6 p.m. at Fort Myers High School, 2635 Cortez Blvd.

Submitted by,

Suzan Harden, Chairperson