



Academic Success Meeting Minutes
April 11, 2011
3:30 – 5:00 p.m.
Eileen Storck, Chair

Members Attending: Melodee Benton, Serena Binner, Nancy Brown, Catherine Chaney, Tara Craig, Jessica Donohue, Patti Durham, Michael Hitsman, Judi Miller, Eileen Storck, Todd Trumpore, Pedro Vicente, Roshanna Williams, and Kim Thomas.

I. Welcome and Introductions

Eileen Storck welcomed everyone and introductions were made.

II. Parent Academy

Judi Miller presented on the Parent Academy. She noted that the program has been successful in New York and Miami-Dade. The mission is to create a community of empowered parents. Over 700 surveys in three languages were received from parents to create a needs assessment. Parents are hungry for information. Volunteers teach free classes at churches on subjects such as behavior management, health and nutrition, discipline, legal, life after high school, and how to help your child succeed. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH) has agreed to support three positions of the Parent Academy - an Executive Director and two assistants. There are two Parent Academy sub-committees – Curriculum and Marketing. The website is www.parentacademyslc.com. The Curriculum Committee meets the second Thursday of every month from 12:30 until 2:00 and she invited all members to attend.

III. Old Business

Positive Truancy Poster Campaign - Eileen Storck announced that 211 has agreed to pay for the printing of the posters and she thanked them. Serena Binner added that she has been in touch with CBS Marketing regarding donating a billboard. She will follow up with them again regarding the process and how to become qualified.

Truancy Update – Nancy Brown noted that the judge has allowed Kids at Hope training prior to Truancy Court. He is requiring the parents to attend at least one training before they can graduate out. She has done one parent training there and four (4) participants have requested additional training and want to be involved. She noted that the schools with Children's Home Society or Boys & Girls Club Truancy Programs have the least amount of referrals. Middle and high school students are not eligible for court because Florida attendance statutes say the parents are not accountable and so there is nothing the judge can do. It does not recognize educational neglect. She noted truancy is an issue of poverty. Transportation is also a problem.

Nancy Brown shared a graph of truancy court unexcused absences. Participants had a total of 757 unexcused absences at the time of their Petition. As of April 7, 2011, these same students had a total of 67. This is a 91% decrease.

III. Kids at Hope Updates

Mike Hitsman stated that at Weatherbee Elementary FCAT is going great so far. He attended Kids at Hope Module III and will be attending the Master's Training in Arizona. He also sent two teachers to the train the trainers sessions. Teachers at the school were provided technical assistance. They are motivated and inspired. Each teacher does one lesson plan a week around Kids at Hope.

Nancy Brown will be doing a parent training at Bayshore Elementary on April 15th. She and Mr. Hitsman will meet to discuss revolving an open parent training at all Kids at Hope schools. Each school should host one parent training and market it at all of the schools.

Calvary Church held a Spring Fling on April 9th and it was very successful, with about 700 people there and 12 vendors. They had free food, free clothing, games, a bounce house, and a climbing wall. Thanks to all schools for sending out 5,000 fliers.

Open community Kids At Hope trainings are being held the second Wednesday of every month in Port St. Lucie and the third Wednesday of every month in Fort Pierce from 6:00 until 8:00 p.m.

IV. Summer Initiatives

IRSC will be having GED classes year-round.

Serena Binner is hoping to have a SWAT Club during the summer two days a week. There will be free trainings for the kids. She hopes to have them at the Health Department. She is looking for funding. Kim Thomas will bring other information on summer camps to the next meeting.

V. Announcements

Nancy Brown congratulated Mr. Hitsman as he stars in the School Board's upcoming truancy video. He walks through Weatherbee's approach to the problem. The video will be released next month.