

VIRGINIA BEACH CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
General Advisory Council for
Technical and Career Education
Advanced Technology Center
Tuesday, December 15, 2009
12:00 noon – 1:30 p.m.

Members Present: Barbara Brinson, Jane Brooks, Jim DeBellis, Cameron Dye, Robert Gerling, Cory Gray, Reza Hashampour, Tammy Jaxtheimer, Jerry Stewart, Armand Taylor, and Amy Wisilosky

Members Absent: Nicki Adams, Judy Begland, Dan Bell, Jim Cervera, Chris Davidson, Robert Hall, Phil Reed, Prescott Sherrod, Tom Smith, and Kevin Will

Technical and Career Education Ex-Officio Members Present: Rhonda Doak, Patrick Konopnicki, John Ledgerwood, Sarah Martin, Robert Mitchell, Daniel Smith, Linda Spruill, David Swanger, Mike Taylor, and Kay Thomas

Technical and Career Education Ex-Officio Members Absent: Ann Marie Garvey, and Alveta Mitchell

Special Guests: Ms. Andrea Harrell for Judy Begland – Opportunity Inc.
Dr. Jim Merrill, Superintendent, Virginia Beach City Public Schools
Dr. Christine Caskey, Assistant Superintendent, Virginia Beach City Public Schools

Call to Order

Jerry Stewart called the meeting to order at 12:11 p.m.

David Swanger, director of the Tech Center, welcomed everyone, thanked members for their help and support, and gave a brief overview of the accomplishments of the Tech Center.

Old Business

The minutes of the October 27 meeting were approved as recorded.

New Business

Sustainability Skill Update

Patrick Konopnicki stated that technical and career education students have embarked on a sustainability journey. The Office of Technical and Career Education has formed a professional learning community of teachers, a green team, who are engaged in implementing sustainability as a skill. The plan is to gather, share, and implement the best practices in the school division.

In response to a request by Mr. Swanger, Ken Anderson, plumbing instructor, agreed to take the lead on the green initiative at the Tech Center. As a member of the sustainability professional learning community, Mr. Anderson told the members that the first objective is to get teachers and students to

change their mindsets, and get them thinking in terms of sustainability. Tech Center teachers applied for a grant from the Virginia Beach Education Foundation to do a sustainability project. Waste from food preparation in the culinary arts department will be turned into compost. This will be used by the landscape design and turf management classes to aid in the growth of herbs, plants, and vegetables. Rain water will be collected and used to water the plants.

Mr. Anderson stated that the new “foundation” house being built on 23 ½ Street will contain a lot of sustainability areas. This presents a challenge because of the location of the house; it must look like old Virginia Beach. The heating will be geothermal to save energy and thereby save money. The students are very much aware of their carbon footprints and have frequent round robin discussions on how to reduce one’s carbon footprint. Mr. Anderson expressed his appreciation to Dr. K for leading the way on the green initiative.

Public Safety

Sid Delepine, public safety instructor at the Tech Center, introduced four students from his program. The students spoke of criminal justice, firefighting, EMT training, and leadership/SkillsUSA. The students explained how they were initially drawn to each area of the public safety program, and how participation in the class has given each a career pathway. The students also mentioned that the certifications they earn in certain areas can enable them to enter the workforce prepared and armed with 21st century skills. The students stated that Mr. Delepine was a great resource for them, as well as teacher and mentor.

Virginia Commission on Youth-Career and Technical Education

Ms. Leah Hamaker is the director of the General Assembly Commission on Youth. As she was unable to be in attendance at the meeting, she participated via telephone connection. Prior to the phone call, members were given a handout which detailed the findings and recommendations of career and technical education programs around the commonwealth from Ms. Hamaker’s commission. One detail that emerged was that good career and technical education programs lower the dropout rate in school divisions. Members were encouraged to read through the information and address comments to Mr. Jerry Stewart, who would see that Ms. Hamaker received them.

Dental Program Goes High Tech

The dental assisting class at the Tech Center provides students excellent opportunities to learn dental assisting techniques. Some weeks ago, a student approached Mrs. Kahan, dental assisting instructor, with a toothache. It was determined that the student needed a root canal, and that was performed by a licensed dentist at the Tech Center. Virginia Beach TV filmed the process, and the students who were not assisting the dentist in the performance of the actual root canal, were able to watch it via SKYPE. It provided a wonderful opportunity for the students to actually participate or see close up how a root canal procedure is performed. Through partnerships with area dentists, approximately \$40,000 of free dental work is provided to needy community members.

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) Update

Patrick Konopnicki provided members with a handout outlining the STEM practices and activities which was also provided prior to the meeting to Dr. James Batterson, Governor Kaine’s lead STEM

advisor. Dr. Batterson contacted Dr. Konopnicki to say that he was quite impressed with everything being done by VBCPS students and teachers in the area of STEM. All school divisions in Hampton Roads are creating a list of activities that can be shared by all. It is hoped that due to the popularity of STEM, there may be some federal grants available in the near future.

Virtual Enterprise

Rhonda Doak reported to the members that the Virtual Enterprise statewide business plan competition will be held Thursday and Friday, December 17 & 18 in Virginia Beach. There are 30 VE firms from across the state participating in the competition. At the end of the day on Thursday, the field will be narrowed to 12 firms, and on Friday, two firms will be chosen to represent Virginia at the national business plan competition in New York City on March 23. Rhonda requested that the members participate in judging the VE Trade Fair on March 18. It will be held at Virginia Wesleyan, and while it is the Virginia competition, firms from different states participate as well. Sixty judges will be needed for the trade fair.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) State Advisory Council

Jerry Stewart is the representative on the CTE council. He reported that their next meeting is scheduled for January, and he would have more information to report at the next General Advisory Council meeting in February. He also stated that the chair of this committee gave a report to the Virginia Department of Education on the state of career and technical education in the commonwealth, and it was favorably received.

There was no further business. Jerry Stewart adjourned the meeting at 1:20 p.m.

The date of the next meeting is February 23, 2010 in the Forum at the Advanced Technology Center. Members will be notified by mail.

Respectfully Submitted,

Terri Wargo
Administrative Office Associate
Office of Technical and Career Education