

Academy of Careers and Technology

LOCAL SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL & RALEIGH COUNTY SCHOOLS CTE ADVISORY MINUTES

The Local School Improvement Council and Raleigh County Schools CTE Advisory meeting was held on Monday September 30, 2024 starting at 5:30 p.m. The following members were in attendance:

George Avis, Carpentry Instructor at the Academy of Careers and Technology
Tim Martin, Owner Old Mill Farm and Landscapes Unlimited
Eden Addair, Evening Welding adult student
Joe Meadows, Owner of Aftermarket Specialties
Glenn Smith, Academy of Careers and Technology Community Education Coordinator
Ginger Lovell, Teacher at Shady Spring High School
Charles Pack, Raleigh County Director of Career Technical Education/Principal of Academy of Careers and Technology
Jessica Basham, Teacher at Trap Hill Middle School
Patty Jo Anderson, Parent of Grade 14 Carpentry student
Cathy Moore, School Counselor at the Academy of Careers and Technology
Scott Pack, Part Owner in STS Construction
Myria Massie, Parent of Diesel Equipment Technology high school student
Tammy Toney, Adult Basic Education Instructor at Raleigh County Adult Learning Center
Steve Simmerman, Custodian at the Academy of Careers and Technology
Robin Walton, Accountant/Secretary at the Academy of Careers and Technology
Tori Taylor Campus Director at New River Community and Technical Education
Adrienne Brellahan, Assistant Principal at the Academy of Careers and Technology
Candace Crouse, Job Placement/Data Coordinator at the Academy of Careers and Technology

The first item addressed was election of LSIC Officers. The council voted to elect Cathy Moore as President and Candace Crouse as Secretary.

The next item on the agenda was an update on the current status of Raleigh County Career and Technical Education. Raleigh County won the District Class IV Pinnacle Award awarded at the CTE Awards Gala held at Canaan Valley Resort held on September 4, 2024. The district received this award based off of being one of two districts in our class size to have the top score of meeting our accountability indicators from last school year's data. These indicators include the number of students in high school and middle school who take CTE courses, how many students complete a CTE program, our work-based learning hours, our NOCTI assessment scores, and our percentage of properly endorsed CTE teachers. Charles Pack emphasized the importance of students leaving our school with state and national certifications such as WV State Welding certificates and OSHA 10-Hour Training Certifications as examples.

Completer numbers for 2023-24 were shared with the council next. A completer is a student who from 9th to 12th grade take 4 courses in a program of study. Last year's number were:

- Independence High School 13
- Liberty High School 23
- Woodrow Wilson High School 16
- Shady Spring High School 47
- Academy of Careers and Technology 204

These numbers were all decreases from the prior school year. Charles Pack explained one reason for the decrease in completers were changes made in business programs over the last few years at the state level. Our business teachers are currently running version 5, 6, and 7 programs due to changes in their curriculum. Promising news was also shared that the preliminary data ran for this school year shows all projections to be up across the county for the current school year.

Placement data was the next item discussed on the agenda. High school placement is reported to the state each December. High school placement tracks if students gained employment, are continuing their education, or joined the military. Our adult placement is reported to the Council on Occupational Education (COE), our accreditation agency, each March. Our adult placement rate was 92% for our last reporting period.

Raleigh County also has 17 Governor's Workforce Credential recipients last school year. The criteria to meet this honor includes:

- Cumulative high school GPA of 3.0 or higher
- State-approved industry certification
- Meet the Governor's Workforce Credential cut-score on NOCTI assessment
- Achieve a minimum score of 95% on the CTE portfolio
- Attain a verified school attendance rate of 95% or higher their senior year
- Pass a minimum of two documented drug-screenings, not less than 30 days apart

The next update was program updates across the county. Independence High School is still searching for a certified Agricultural teacher. The Aerospace Engineering program at Liberty High School is now gone. After losing three teachers over the course of a few years the program closed. Our middle school CTE programs have added Project Lead The Way Gateway programs. PLTW Gateway programs focus on problem solving and finding solutions while keeping an engineering notebook. We have two high school PLTW programs one at Shady Spring High School and another at the Academy of Careers and Technology that students can continue into after middle school if they are interested.

Raleigh County had 89% of middle school students who took one career exploration class last school year. These middle school career exploration programs expose students to careers in the 16 career clusters. These courses help student in their PEP planning and students create a portfolio while taking these courses. We had 71% of high school students in Raleigh County take one CTE course and 44% of high school students who took two courses in one school year. These students who take two courses are referred to as concentrators and the goal was 22% which we exceeded with 44%.

Charles Pack discussed that Superintendent Starcher recently met with four students from our school. He mentioned questions for a future meeting he was going to suggest would be to discuss any barriers student have to attending our school.

The state requires all completers to take a NOCTI assessment. The students take a pre-test in the fall and an audit in the spring. Last year our students surpassed the goal of 60% hitting the workforce entry score on the audit with 74% of students meeting this goal.

The Academy of Careers and Technology recently hired three new teachers:

Brandon Carter, Plumbing

Josh Reeve, Embedded Math

David Pack, Diesel Equipment Technology

Simulated Workplace expectations are still in place across the county in our CTE programs. The idea is to run classrooms as close to what industry looks like as possible. The students are empowered to take on leadership roles and run their classrooms/shops like a business. They develop company handbooks, receive job titles, and follow attendance procedures similar to what they will do one day in their industry.

The next discussion was on how our high school and adult programs are nearing capacity and the need for more space. We turn down students wanting to go into healthcare programs every year. Our long-term goal is to ask the county to consider another building on our campus just to host our adult only programs such as Cosmetology and Practical Nursing that would free up more space in our current building for more high school programs.

The Strategic Plan was reviewed next. The first goal discussed was the continuation of our Middle School Career Exploration Program ran by Robert Schmid. Eighth grade students from all five middle schools in Raleigh County come spend one day a week at our school. The goal of the program is not only to expose students to the programs of study that will be available to them in high school, but to also motivate students who may be struggling academically or with attendance to get back on track as we reinforce to these students they will not have room in their schedules to attend here in high school if they do not pass all of their classes and that students must have 90% attendance in order to certify in their program of study.

Our second goal discussed from the Strategic Plan was student retention. The goal is to intervene before the end of the semester. Teachers fill out a form to refer students to the Retention Team which is comprised of Cathy Moore (School Counselor), Sarah Rahal (Vocation Specialist), Adrienne Brellahan (Assistant Principal), and Michelle Farmer (Communities in Schools Liaison). We are very fortunate to have a Communities in Schools Liaison who is able to assist students in multiple areas including helping them find work boots and any other needed school supplies.

The third goal of the Strategic Plan is Adult Basic Education and Adult Population Success. Some of the services they offer is TABE testing prior to entering a program. This helps see what areas a student is weak in before they start a program. Tutoring is offered for free in any weak areas. They also offer classes on test taking skills. Our goal of all of these measures is to increase student success in our programs.

Our fourth goal is Recruitment. We seem to be meeting this goal as we are close to capacity. One suggestion last year was to advertise on electronic billboards which we are now doing. Adrienne Brellahan came up with the idea to do our first ever Tech or Treat on October 30th. This event will invite the community and their children into our building for trick-or-treat while also visiting each shop/classroom to see what programs we offer here.

Our fifth goal is Work-Based Learning. Hands-on activities is vital to career and technical education. The state department based on Perkins guidelines requires us to report how many hours our students spend in these hands-on activities in our CTE programs. The goal this year set up the state department is 11% of Raleigh County 9th-12th graders will spend 25 hours this year in work-based learning activities. The challenge had been the tool that teachers were provided by the state department to record these hours in previous years was not always the easiest to use. The state has listened and made improvements such as taking the choices of activities from five categories to two categories to simplify recording these activities. Raleigh County met the work-based learning goal last year which is an improvement because the year before we did not meet the goal.

Cathy Moore asked the council to approve the Strategic Plan and all members present voted to approve the Strategic Plan along with the Mission Statement “Preparing students for their future”.

Adrienne Brellahan presented discipline data from the 2023-24 School Year. She explained that Level 1 are the least severe issues and Level 4 are the most severe issues. Our data showed we had the following:

- Level 1: 27 incidents
- Level 2: 10 incidents
- Level 3: 5 incidents
- Level 4: 4 incidents

We only had one student who was a repeat offender. All of the rest of our issues were single incident situations. We had six out of school suspensions and three in-school suspensions. A goal for our future is to implement positive behavior interventions. One reason we feel we have very little discipline issues is teachers are encouraged to call home to intervene early if there are issues. Charles Pack also praised our teachers for their classroom management skills.

The council next reviewed our Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment. It consisted of the following parts:

- >Part A - Evaluation of Student Performance
 - »Part B - Size, Scope, and Quality
 - »Part C - Labor Market Alignment
 - »Part D - Implementing Programs of Study
 - »Part E - Recruitment, Retention and Training of CTE Educators
 - »Part F - Progress Toward Improving Access and Equity

Charles Pack explained that the Perkins Act sets money aside for workforce preparation for students at-risk.

Part A:

Our data showed that special needs populations are performing comparably to students without accommodations.

Part B:

Charles Pack explained we had 451 students who applied last year to 20 programs. The students then go through an interview process where factors such as grades and attendance are reviewed. We have several very popular programs where we are not able to serve all students. Examples of these programs include Welding, Electrical Technician, and Medical Assisting.

Part C:

We collected data for our workforce needs in Raleigh County from WorkForce West Virginia and the Beckley-Raleigh County Chamber of Commerce workforce data. Our school, based on this data, in the last few years added programs such as CDL, HVAC Technician, and Plumber Technician. We offer all three programs to adults through evening classes as well as CDL has a daytime option.

Part D:

Our school has started working with New River Community and Technical College the last two years on dual credit opportunities. Last year we offered Medical Assisting, Law and Public Safety, and Computer Systems Repair Technology. This year we are offering Therapeutic Services and potentially Automotive Technology, Welding, and ProStart Restaurant Management. Tori Taylor from New River Community and Technical College explained to the council there is no cost to the student. Students can even take other classes at reduced rates for example English 101.

Part E:

We previously discussed Recruitment in the Strategic Plan so further discussion here on recruitment.

Part F:

Our data shows there were 11% special needs students who attended our school last year which is up to 24% this year. This trend is proof of our progress in access and equity. Adrienne Brellahan also pointed out that our poverty percentage is 54.42% and how CTE can assist in getting students workforce skills to get them out of poverty situations.

Cathy Moore then asked the council to approve the Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment and it was approved by all member present.

Charles Pack announced the county LSIC and Board of Education Meeting for our school would be December 10th at 5:30 p.m. at Park Middle School.

Tim Martin then asked if all teachers go out to do the interviews in the schools for next year's students. Charles Pack said all high school teachers do conduct interviews. For programs with more applicants than spots this helps teachers decide who to fill the available spots with. For programs that do not fill up teachers are at least able to answer any questions students may have about programs.

Charles Pack explained how ACE funding has made it possible for our adult students to attend our programs for free.

Cathy Moore explained the process to recruit students for next year will begin this week as she starts her visits to visit the four high schools. Students after her meetings can sign up for a tour on November 14th of our school. Students apply in January 2025 and we interview students in February 2025.

Charles Pack asked the parents who were in attendance if their students had any barriers to attending our school. The three parents present said their students did not have any barriers and loved it here. The only slight barrier Patty Jo Anderson mentioned her son took band in high school and did not have room in his schedule to attend a two-year program while in high school. He is now attending as a Grade 14 student and loves it. We allow adults to take any high school program for free that has available spots. The state calls these students Grade 14 students. We also have private school and home school students attending our school.