

Gainesville High School Advisory Council Minutes
September 8, 2020

Virtual Meeting via Google Meets

Members in Attendance

David Shelnutt
Steve Bauer
Keith Watts
April Tisher
Annie Hermansen-Baez
Anastasia Albanese-O'Neal
Damond Hutchinson
Tara Montgomery
Erin Smith
Florida Bridgewater Alford
Julio Sarmiento
Janet Gil
Katie Rohan

Non-Members in Attendance

John Green

Welcome/Introductions

Mr. Shelnutt welcomed everyone to our first meeting of the school year and asked everyone who was online to introduce themselves. He then turned the meeting over to last year's Chair Keith Watts.

Call to Order

Keith Watts called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

SAC Chair Nominations

Keith Watts asked for nominations for Chair for the 2020-2021 school year for GHS SAC Chair. Steve Bauer nominated Keith Watts, Tara Montgomery seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

He then asked for nominations for Vice-Chair. Keith Watts nominated Steve Bauer, April Tisher seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

After reviewing the minutes from the March meeting, Steve Bauer made a motion to approve the minutes, April Tisher seconded and the minutes were approved.

Financial Report

Mr. Shelnutt went over the Financial Report, which also included the final report from last year. The balance in ADS as of 09/04/2020 is \$245,941.94; balance in LOT is \$51,058.28; for a total of \$ 297,000.22. He gave a brief overview of how we get our funding and what our recurring expenses are.

Principal's Comments

Mr. Shelnutt stated it has been a very unique few weeks and he is very proud of our students, parents, faculty and staff. There have been a few hiccups but overall so proud of how the GHS community has supported each other. Currently there are 1820 enrolled, roughly 100 less than last year. Approximately 800 students are attending Brick and Mortar and just over 1000 are Digital Academy. There also has been quite a bit of 'flip flopping', students switching between DA and BM.

School Improvement Plan

The five goals laid out for GHS were sent to each SAC member for review. They are: reducing out of school suspension by at least 15%; raising % of achievement to 41% for student's w/disabilities; increasing graduation rate by 5%; increasing achievement of AA students by 3% in both ELA and Math; increasing lowest quartile 3% annually or 1% over the highest of the last 3 years in both ELA and Math. He will need SAC members to vote on the SIP, which needs to be submitted to the state prior to our next meeting. He also asked everyone to take a few days to review the plan and email him any questions. He will then send a 'vote-by-email' out to all members. Julio Sarmiento asked if any of the proposed steps already been implemented. Mr. Shelnutt said that yes, there has been a dramatic reduction of out-of-school suspensions over the last few year.

Financial Requests

Keith Watts explained that in the past our policy has been that any financial requests be submitted at least 1 week prior to a meeting for consideration. In addition, for large requests there must be minimum three bids attached, if possible.

We have an unwritten rule that any group requesting assistance from SAC for funding will have raised a portion of the amount or plan on making an effort to do so. Obviously different groups will have different situations and we will consider them on a case-by-case basis. He referred to it as 'having skin in the game.'

Mr. Watts received two requests on the day of the meeting, so they will be tabled until our October meeting.

Mr. Shelnutt had one request for funding from SAC to pay for one teaching unit. He explained that every spring he proposes this to SAC and it is approved. He then has the ability to hire an additional teacher over the summer without approval. With the closure of schools due to COVID-19 we did not have any meetings after the March meeting. While he will be willing to follow protocol and wait for discussion at our next meeting, there was discussion among members how this is a request we approve every year. The purpose of the additional unit is to help lower class sizes. Keith Watts said he was OK with bending the rule and voting tonight on the issue. There was a consensus that this was an important request and Steve Bauer made the motion to approve SAC funding one (1) full teaching. It was also noted that in the event Mr. Shelnutt will not need the unit to lower class sizes the funds would be returned to SAC. April Tisher seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

It was also noted at our March meeting that we agreed to discuss the funding of After School Tutoring, Student of the Week and Mr. Kaufmann's ESE cooking classes at our first meeting of each new school year. These are requests that are brought up each year and are always approved. The discussion on all of these was very positive. The yearly amount that we fund for Student of the Week is \$1,000. After School Tutoring varies each month depending on the number of teachers tutoring. The yearly amount that we fund for Student of the Week is \$1,000. Florida Bridgewater asked how we would include Digital Academy students, as they should be considered as well as Brick and Mortar students. Mr. Shelnutt will look into the logistics of how to include them. We will also find out if the cooking unit will be continued this year due to COVID. We will table this request until we know more from Mr. Kaufmann.

Steve Bauer made the motion to continue to fund \$1,000 for Student of the Week and also the After School Tutoring Program. Tara Montgomery seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

SAC Concerns/Comments

April Tisher asked if SAC has considered requests for bus transportation. She specifically is inquiring whether the football boosters could submit a request to help fund an out-of-town charter bus to Wakulla. She explained that with the COVID restrictions on concessions and loss of the number of home games their booster account is significantly lower than in past years and it will be a financial hardship to fund the cost of the bus. Mr. Shelnutt said that we have occasionally approved bus transportation and to go ahead and submit the request so we can discuss it. She will look into what funds they have in their internal account and if they have the need, she will submit a request at a future meeting.

Keith Watts expressed his thanks to all SAC members for attending our first-ever virtual meeting and for their service on the committee.

Anastasia Albanese-O'Neal also expressed her thanks to the faculty and staff for making everyone feel welcome and at ease.

Meeting Dates

The dates for this year's meetings are:

2020: 9/8; 10/5; 11/2; 12/7;

2021: 1/11; 2/1; 3/1; 4/5 and 5/3

Our next meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 5, 2020 at 5:30 pm via Goggle Meets. Mr. Shelnut will send out the invite after 5:00.

With no other comments or concerns, the meeting was adjourned at 6:49 pm.