

Clarke County School District
Advisory Committee on District Sustainability
First meeting: January 9th, 2024 - 4:30 PM
Board Office, Room 303

Minutes:

1. Call to order (4:31 PM)

2. Roll call, self-introductions: Patricia Yager; Nicole Hull; Tim Denson; Garrick Askew; Mark Bailey; John Gilbreath; Troy Bassett; Shurod Swift; Paula Farmer; Donna Elder; Audrey Hughes; Montu Miller; Halo Smart; Christina Hylton; Mike Wharton; Kevin Kirsche; Justin Ellis; Alfie Vick; Erwin Greene; Tawana Mattox; Cary Ritzler; Ramsey Nix; Robbie Hooker; Tylasha Mumford.

Some student members were unable to attend. They included: Anna Jo Dunlop, Kyah Campbell, Arrow Callahan, Tommy Nix. We will work to make sure they can attend the next meeting.

3. Charge: the committee charge was read by Dr. Yager

Need and Purpose: Given the evolving state of our climate and the energy transition underway, the purpose of the committee is to develop a district plan to minimize our risk and maximize opportunities for our students related to climate resilience.

Scope: The scope of the committee will include examination, prioritization, and recommendation of opportunities for the district to increase health and safety, equity, financial health, waste management, and curriculum and career readiness related to climate resilience and sustainability. Early work should include considerations of an energy audit.

Timeline: The committee will be assembled during Fall 2023, with its first meeting held during January 2024 and proceeding at least monthly after that.

All meetings of this committee will be open to the public. Subcommittees created to focus on key topics are encouraged. The committee chair(s) will present quarterly written or oral reports to the Board of Education with majority and minority opinions welcomed.

The committee efforts will proceed for one year, with a final report due in **January 2025**. The option to renew committee work for another year will be assessed by the board following a review of the first-year report.

4. Motivating themes: the committee was encouraged to focus their work through the following lenses:

- a. Health and safety
- b. Equity

- c. Fiscal responsibility
- d. Waste management
- e. Career readiness

5. Leadership structure: co-chairs: Erwin Greene and Ramsey Nix were nominated and elected co-chairs.

6. Subcommittees: Subcommittee priorities were discussed.

"Green infrastructure" was identified as a gap in the initial agenda. This subcommittee would look at designing outdoor spaces to reduce the impacts of extreme heat and stormwater on playgrounds and other school property.

Another interest was improving food security with a farm-to-school program that would enhance family engagement and sustainability education. An audit of ongoing or previous programs like this would be helpful before building something new.

We discussed the need to prioritize an HVAC committee to assist district with new purchases, and an energy audit and improved metering to identify ways to improve efficiency in our power usage. This topic led to a discussion of the need to create a subcommittee to identify and apply for federal grant dollars designed to support an energy transition. Athens and CCSD likely qualify for federal dollars prioritized by the Justice 40 component of the Inflation Reduction Act.

It was suggested that the "school bus" subcommittee should be expanded to include all transportation issues such as fleet vehicles and equitable access to alternate transportation (sidewalks and bike lanes).

Finally, there was a great deal of interest around how sustainability initiatives can support education and career development of our students, our families, and our community.

Following the discussion, we identified the initial subcommittees and membership as follows:

- a. **HVAC:** Bailey, Greene, TBD
- b. **Energy:** Mattox, Bassett, Hughes, Callahan, Ellis, T. Nix, Wharton
- c. **Transportation:** R. Nix, Mumford, Denson, Swift, Hull, Ritzler
- d. **Green Infrastructure:** Vick, Hylton, Farmer, Askew, Dunlop, Campbell, Kirsche, Miller
- e. **Extramural funding and cost sharing:** Smart, Elder, Yager, Ritzler

Every subcommittee will be charged with identifying priorities for improving district sustainability, recommend a 3-yr, 5-yr, and 10-yr plan (as appropriate), and organize the work in terms of the *lenses* listed above. In particular, the work should be well-connected to education and outreach.

Subcommittees were encouraged to meet during the coming weeks, identify leadership, and report their findings to the full committee in February. Meetings by teleconference are allowed for subcommittees.

Next full committee meeting: February 13th, 4:30 PM.