

CCSP Education Committee
January 16, 2008

The Education Committee of the Clark County Strategic Plan met for a monthly meeting on Wednesday, January 16, 2008 at Dawson Educational Co-Op. The following were in attendance: Dr. Stan Miller (Arkadelphia Public Schools); Mr. Lewis Diggs (Centerpoint Schools); Mr. Bobby Smithton (Gurdon Public Schools); Dr. Rex Horne (Ouachita Baptist University); Dr. Judy Harrison (Henderson State University); Dr. Lewis Shepherd (Ouachita Baptist University); Dr. Virginia Anderson (Arkadelphia Public School); Dr. Bob Houston (retired educator); Ms. Pat Donlow-Wright (Arkadelphia Public School); Dr. Terry Hardy (Ouachita Baptist University); Mr. Bud McMillian (Arkadelphia Public Schools); Ms. Sharon Kimery (Centerpoint Schools); Ms. Donna Hilton (Arkadelphia Daily Siftings Herald); Ms. Shelley Loe (Southern Financial Partners); Ms. Carrie Roberson (Southern Financial Partners).

Dr. Stan Miller welcomed the committee and thanked them for their participation. The members reviewed the CCSP Education Goals and discussed prioritizing the goals.

Dr. Judy Harrison reported the State of Arkansas is aligning public school and college curriculums. She also reported that the State “redefining” teacher preparation and there will be a meeting in Little Rock on January 23 to discuss high school redesign.

Pat Donlow-Wright gave an update on the 24/7 daycare being constructed in the industrial park. The construction of this will fulfill the CCSP Education Goal #2, Action Step D. The architect is working on the design of the building. There are challenges due to the non-traditional space needed for the center like beds and showers. The organization is working with the Arkansas Department of Health and Human Services to insure that the construction meets or exceeds standards required for a childcare center.

It was noted that the Arkansas Department of Education and the Arkansas Department of Higher Education really do not have a “dialogue” between the entities. It was suggested that Clark County design what they think is needed academically and then present to the ADE and the ADHE.

It was discussed to survey the industries to find out the type of work force that is needed. It was suggested that we be proactive and try to be predictive of future industries that might locate in Clark County.

It was discussed to make a priority the “Clark County Promise” to ensure that all students from Clark County have the financial resources to attend college if they choose. The project could be patterned after the newly announced “El Dorado Promise” in Union County. It provides college tuition to every graduate of their school. The amount of tuition is determined by the number of years the student attended school in the district. If Clark County is able to fulfill this goal, it was suggested that the tuition be paid only to universities within Arkansas.

The committee discussed the large number of Arkansas citizens who only have 2 years of college. There could be a program to recruit those students to encourage them to complete their education. A “cyber college” similar to the one at UALR could be developed to assist students and non-traditional students achieve their degree.

Dr. Miller asked the committee to send their top priorities for the education sub-committee to him. The priorities will be presented to the CCSP Steering Committee on February 5.