

**Wichita Falls Independent School District
Audiovisual Production Advisory Committee Meeting
Wednesday, May 18, 2016
3:15 p.m. Hirschi High School Tech Plaza**

CALL TO ORDER

Michelle Wood, WFISD's CTE specialist, called the Audiovisual Production Advisory meeting to order at 3:15 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Shonna Norton, Hirschi CTE
Jackie McCartney, McNiel assistant principal
Chad Johnson, KFDX-TV
Jeff Arrington, KFDX-TV
Rex Seigler, Hirschi
Alex McClung, WFISD teacher at Rider
Synthia Kirby, Carrigan
Ashley Thomas, public information officer for WFISD
Jessica Wilkins, webmaster for WFISD
Michelle Wood, CTE specialist
Ann Work Goodrich, communications specialist for WFISD

BUSINESS

The group elected a chair (Chad Johnson) and a Secretary (Jeff Arrington) to direct the meeting. A WFISD employee may not hold these positions, according to rules put forth by the Perkins Grant, which sponsored the meeting.

OVERVIEW

The community feedback from this meeting will help the school district put in place programs that will train students to ultimately meet community needs. The job of the committee is to guide and direct the school district in each area.

COURSE SEQUENCES

Students in the Audiovisual Production class are part of the Arts Audiovisual and Communications Technology Track. Students now take their courses by following a list of prerequisites. They start as freshmen with the Principles class: Principles of Arts, Audio/Video and Communications Technology.

Something new next year: Students will take the Animation class as sophomores. "We think our students will respond well to this," said Mrs. Wood.

It is the second course that will be taught at the home campus. Then students will be at the CTE Center for AV Production (as juniors) and Advanced AV Production (as seniors) or for Graphic Design and Illustration (for juniors) and Advanced Graphic Design and Illustration (for seniors).

Classes in this track are listed as (1 credit/2 slots) or (2 credits/3 slots). Mrs. Wood explained that means they receive one credit but the course requires 2 slots in their schedule because of the travel time necessary to drive or be bused to the Hirschi tech plaza (this year) and the CTE Center (in 2017).

“They need two course periods to travel, but they only get credit for one course,” she said.

Next year, AV animation will only be taught at the Hirschi tech plaza.

This transportation schedule “will mirror what will happen at the CTE Center” when it opens, said Mrs. Wood.

All students have already had the prerequisite Principles class.

ENROLLMENT

Enrollment for Audiovisual classes “is pretty good,” said Mrs. Wood. There are two to three sections of 75 in each on each of the three high school campuses.

Fifty students are enrolled in Animation and will move on to Graphic Design next year.

This year, prerequisites have limited the number of students in the Audiovisual Production class. “That’s good because there’s a smaller group with advanced skills, which helps because the class is project-centered,” said Mrs. Wood.

The district has decided that instead of cloning classes for the various school buildings, they will offer one quality class, such as the Audiovisual Production class, at one source and bring students to it.

Chad Johnson asked if students would be bused to Hirschi for the class.

Mrs. Wood said yes, if they didn’t already attend Hirschi. “It looks a little hairy right now,” she said of the schedule. “But it’s gonna work.”

CURRICULUM

Hirschi technology instructor Rex Seigler said there are “vast holes in the TEKS being taught” in the current class. TEKS are the minimum requirements listed by the state for each class.

He is trying to build sequences and accumulate material from YouTube and find a repository for it all. He is using Noodle as an educators’ network to search and save educational material for the class.

The Principles class has “never had a unified curriculum,” said Mrs. Wood. The goal for this summer is to pay teachers to write all of the first- and second-year course work so the district is teaching the same information on all its campuses. “When students get to advanced levels, we want them to have the same foundations,” she said. “We will be paying for curriculum development for the first two courses to make a level playing field for all.”

Mr. Seigler said in his class “a specific product is made.” The product is standard; the students can use their creativity to choose its topic.

Mrs. Kirby said that the TEKS are standards laid out by the state, the minimum requirements that must be taught in each class. There have been holes in this particular curriculum, which was “a staffing issue,” she said. “That will be corrected with our curriculum writing.”

The TEKS will also change with the 2017 textbook adoption, she said.

It’s important not to have extreme expectations in the first year with kids in this subject, said Alexandra McClung.

“There are lots of sources,” said Mr. Seigler.

“UNT (The University of North Texas) is a great resource,” said Mrs. Kirby.

“That’s what I’m basing a lot on,” said Mr. Seigler. The TEKS now requires a lot of creating thinking, he said.

Mrs. Wood said there is a production studio located at Hirschi.

Mr. Seigler said he is investigating ways to do closed circuit announcements at the school. “This unit is connected well with the Internet,” he said.

“It’s the same at Rider,” said Rider teacher Ms. McClung. “The studio is not used at all. We don’t have time.”

“Is it set up to record them?” asked Hirschi teacher Shonna Norton.

Jackie McCartney said McNiel “has the best studio in the district. We produce and shoot in high definition,” he said. “Even at Kirby Junior High – for five years we did an announcement broadcast. I tried to tie it into my program here with Final Cut so when they got here they already had used the software.”

The junior high program is better than the high school program, agreed Mrs. Wood.

“There’s been a lag at the high school level,” she said.

Mr. Seigler said the high schools need a cost-effective and labor un-intensive way to improve.

Ashley Thomas said the district has installed advanced TV screens throughout the district, and on them WFISD can control presentations. “I’d like to see us create more video to showcase student work for parents who could watch while they wait in a school foyer,” she said. The CTE video track is a natural way to harness that, she said.

“Once we have the CTE Center, we will have students who have time to create documentary packages. I see it becoming a program of students at the campus,” said Ms. Thomas.

The cable channel that the district directs through Time Warner Cable is different, she said. Ideally she would like to use it to stream board meetings, graduation ceremonies or banquets like the Teacher of the Year banquet. But no video can be played on the cable channel. It will only take Power Point slides.

Mr. McCartney said he wants to improve his program so much that “we put Midwestern State University to shame.”

“We need to have a schedule and have documentaries produced by our students,” said Ms. Thomas.

Mr. Seigler said he wants students to know how to do broadcast journalism.

“It’s a good foundation for college,” said Ms. Thomas. Students need to learn how to work a camera and edit. They need to see television studio set-ups.

Ms. McClung said, “And not just KFDX. McNeil has better equipment than I did when I worked at Channel 6. I want to kick their butt.”

“The issue now is the Time Warner thing,” said Ms. Thomas. “The feed is coming out of Carrigan. We need a channel in a box.”

Students need to learn about programming and deadlines, the group agreed.

Students should be shooting ball games. “All MSU does is a weekly broadcast,” said Ms. Thomas.

Mr. Seigler said the CTE Center will need a closet of appropriate on-air clothes for students to pull out when needed. They need to learn what is appropriate for broadcast – the appropriate shirts and jackets.

Mrs. Wood said that the CTE Center will try to approximate a work environment.

Cosmetology students will wear smocks; health services students will wear lab coats. “It shows the student is part of a profession, not just a student hanging out,” said Mrs. Wood.

“And when you’re going out on stories, you can’t look like a bum,” said Ms. McClung.

“An important part of the job is to dress appropriately,” said Ashley Thomas. “They need to hear it from businesspeople.”

Mrs. Wood said community members can come in and do clinics on what is expected in the work world. “I love this part of the community partnership,” she said. “You can say, ‘I’m an employer, and this is what’s required.’” Some audio-visual students are shocked that, yes, television people must really show up at the studio each day at 3:30 a.m. “And be perky.”

They also need to understand that there are a lot of positions that are vital but are not done in front of the camera, said Ms. Thomas.

“Our anchors would love to come out and speak” to students, said Chad Johnson.

Ms. McClung said students also have misperceptions about the television on-air talent.

They think the on-air person must just look pretty and smile and read something someone else wrote. When Ms. McClung was on-air talent, she was told how to wear her hair, do her nails and what jewelry was OK and what was not. “They chose my hair cut,” she said. “I had to pay for it. They chose my jewelry.”

It’s OK not to want to be on camera, she said. One student was a great writer, turned in copy early for deadlines – unheard of—but insisted he couldn’t do television because he didn’t want to be on camera. “He’d make a great producer or digital director,” said Ms. McClung. “He just didn’t know” those jobs existed.

“The quickest way to Dallas is with a camera on your shoulder,” said Mr. Johnson.

Mr. Johnson said he knows of a student who is now employed with a large television studio and he just shoots B roll. But you have to start out by eating your Ramen Noodles and working your way up into a nice position like that one, he said.

CERTIFICATIONS

Adobe Photo Shop

Adobe Illustrator
Adobe Premier
Adobe Cloud

“We do Creative Cloud,” said Mr. Johnson. “We went to (Adobe) Premier four years ago.”

Mr. Johnson said if students know how to edit on computer, then they know how to edit.

Mrs. Wood says the district has Creative Cloud and will move toward AV production.

Ms. McClung asked Chad Johnson if his employer, KFDX, used Photoshop. Yes, he said.

“News Production uses it a little bit.”

Mr. Johnson said he uses Premier, Photoshop, Illustrator and Audition.

“Once you know how to use one, you pretty much know how to use the rest,” said Ms. Thomas. “It all works together.”

Mrs. Wood said the district will keep the three programs within the same certification plan.

“Now that we’re on Creative Cloud, we always get the upgrades,” said Mr. Johnson.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

There are no student organizations for AV production, said Mrs. Wood.

Students may compete through Skills USA, which is used by Carrigan students.

“Competition breeds excellence,” she said.

Another organization is the National Technical Honor Society. This is only open now to Carrigan students and Automotive students. Students must earn a 3.0 grade point average overall, not just in their career classes.

Students will produce at a wholly new level if they are competing against one another, said Mrs. Wood.

“I’d like to see student-produced work and get it on the calendar,” said Ms. Thomas.

At Rider, journalism teacher Mary Beth Lee chooses the top two videos produced by her students and enters them in state competition. “I’m all about competition,” said Ms. McClung.

Mr. Seigler pointed to 12 national Telly Awards that are displayed around the Hirschi Technology Plaza. They were earned by Hirschi students under the leadership of former instructor Steve Tucker, who retired mid-year. “We’ll keep standards up,” said Mr. Seigler.

SUPPLIES

In 2016-2017, the district wants to make use of what it already has and “upgrade a little,” said Mrs. Wood. There will be all new audiovisual equipment and systems in the CTE Center when it opens Fall 2017, so the district is holding back from buying much new this year.

“For the first- and second-year programs at each campus, we have to evaluate needs,” said Mrs. Wood. “We may get laptops so every kid has one. We are examining needs for this next year.”

It is helpful to know that she should purchase on-air uniforms for students to use, said Mrs. Wood.

Mr. McCartney said Tricaster is an important piece of equipment to have. A Tricaster offers multi-camera switching, simultaneous live streaming and recording, live virtual sets, integrated DDRs, titling, video effects and audio mixing in high definition and standard definition.

McNiel has a Tricaster, he said. “Their Instant Replay is pretty big,” he said. “What about cameras. Do you have any experience with Blackmagic cameras?”

(A Blackmagic production camera is considered the go-to choice for shooting 4K video with a single sensor/interchangeable-lens system. It costs less than \$4,000.)

Jeff Arrington from KDFX said he had not worked with a Blackmagic camera but was familiar with some of its other products. “I’ve used one. They’re good,” he said.

Mr. McCartney said to set up a Blackmagic studio camera, it would cost about \$4,000. “It’s a pretty decent camera. You can control it from far away.

Nikon DSLR cameras cost about \$1,500 and are used to shoot most footage, said Mr. McCartney.

Mrs. Wood said a consultant priced out a camera for the audiovisual department at \$50,000. She told him no. She could justify spending perhaps as much as \$5,000 or \$10,000 for an important camera, but \$50,000 for one? No. “We haven’t ordered any yet,” she said. Consultants sometimes get carried away with what is best and forget that the end product users are students, she said.

Mr. Johnson said KFDX did have three, but now have two since they went high definition.

Mr. McCartney said he thinks the key supplies are cameras and a Tricaster. Another important tool: a character generator, like Chiron IP, he said.

Mr. Johnson said that Ross Xpressions is standard for real time motion graphics systems.

Mr. McCartney said that “Tricaster’s own product is not real great.” He prefers Chiron.

Mr. Arrington said he uses Ross Xpressions and buys it for everyone.

Mr. McCartney asked if it were dedicated.

Mr. Arrington said yes.

“It’s like a station in a box,” said Mr. McCartney. Harris makes one.

Mr. McCartney advocated a dedicated unit from Imagine technologies or Plack technologies with two inputs and one output. “Build a play list with the character generator on top,” he said. “That’s what I’d advocate for the Time Warner station.” Time Warner needs an upgrade on the fiber end, he said.

Mrs. Wood asked if Time Warner runs its cable in the Hatton Road location of the career center.

Everyone is dumping satellite and Time Warner and going with Internet service only, said Mr. Arrington.

Mr. McCartney said his biggest concern was with closed captioning being required. "That's your homework. Find out for us. Then you'd have to do closed captioning on EVERY thing."

"It's not cheap," said Mr. Johnson. "It's also time consuming."

"What do other CTEs do?" asked Mr. Johnson.

Mrs. Wood explained that when the CTE Center was originally laid out, the audiovisual program was not a part of its program offerings. "Now it's a big chunk," she said. The CTE Center will now feature sound editing rooms, four in a suite. It will have collaborative tables where students can work together. A conference room adjoins the studio. The studio will feature Infinity Edge and a green wall. The studio will be designed with windows where visitors can see in so they can watch students operating the equipment without interrupting or bothering them. Monitors fixed to the outside of the studio will give a live feed.

There was a feature allowing tours to look down from a second floor on the audiovisual activity, but that feature was cut out for cost reasons.

In general, you don't want to give high school students a great deal of privacy, even in classrooms, said Synthia Kirby.

Rooms will have windows and glass doors, she said.

At the television newsroom, "everybody sits at their desks to do audio and editing," said Mr. Arrington. "There are no editing rooms."

"Have you seen the quality go down without those editing rooms?" asked Mrs. Wood.

"It's all about collaboration," said Mr. McCartney.

The editing rooms have been designed to fit two to three people working together.

Ms. McClung said when she worked at the television news station, "we were all adults" and could work at their desks. An individual editing room might help students stay focused on the task, she said.

Mrs. Wood said the audiovisual area will also have a storage area that connects directly with outside through a garage door so equipment can be moved in and out.

Students need to learn that you don't start out at anchor positions. You work your way up to the top spots. It will be third- and fourth- year students (juniors and seniors) who will do the broadcasts. It's also important that students see the behind-the-scenes work at a television station. When you work in the industry, you learn – and believe – that it doesn't matter if you're the anchor or working in the engineering room, you're just as valuable to the team.

"The appreciation for each position was lost on interns," said Ms. McClung. "They all want to be in front of the camera."

Jessica Wilkins said, "You can get a job quicker if you can do each job in the television station."

"Yes, those are the ones hired, if you can do a little bit of everything," said Mr. Johnson.

Ms. McClung, formerly an anchor, said she was one of those who could do it all in the television studio – and she sometimes had to. However, too many students come out of four-year college broadcasting programs and are too picky about the things they're willing to do. "Terrible attitude kids have these days," she said.

Mrs. Wood said teachers need to stress the value in all the positions – and create rotations so students can learn each job. Students should also be doing the video board at Memorial Stadium, said Mr. Johnson. “As these kids get more advanced, have them do it. Have them making highlight reels. Do the work of switchers and cameras,” he said.

SPECIAL POPULATIONS

WFISD takes all kids, regardless of their disabilities, and will provide special accommodations for those who need it, said Mrs. Wood. This is not a gender specific program but draws both men and women equally. Everything is ADA accessible.

OTHER

The CTE Center will be 123,000 square feet. WFISD will move into it in the summer of 2017 to open Fall 2017.

The advisory meetings will happen two times each year. The next one will be in September 2016. Mrs. Wood will tap community input as she gets closer to purchasing equipment. Nothing has been purchased yet, she said.

She was asked about a lighting grid and she said yes, it is in the specs.

“Is it florescent or LED lighting?” asked Mr. Johnson.

“The entire building is LED – a plea from maintenance,” said Mrs. Wood.

Mr. Johnson said at KFDX, “Our studio lighting is all florescent.”

The meeting ended at 4:40 p.m.