

**Wichita Falls Independent School District  
Criminal Justice Advisory Committee Meeting  
Tuesday June 7, 2016  
2 p.m. Education Center Room 301**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Michelle Wood, WFISD's CTE Coordinator, called the Criminal Justice Advisory Committee Meeting to order at 2:03 p.m.

**PARTICIPANTS**

Michelle Wood, CTE coordinator  
Synthia Kirby, Carrigan principal  
Melvin Joyner, WFISD  
Brien Conner, WCSO  
Mike Hopper, Vernon College  
Tyler Reed, TPWD  
Dan Buesing, TX DPS  
Catherine Rudy, MSU  
Kirk Wolfe, Juvenile Probation  
Manuel Borrego, Wichita Falls Police Department  
Ann Work Goodrich, WFISD communications specialist

**BUSINESS**

The group elected a chair (Dan Buesing) and a secretary (Brien Conner) 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**

This meeting between WFISD leaders and community members is designed to start the conversation between the two for the benefit of students. WFISD wants to prepare students for jobs the community needs...and wants to hear from the community about the skills it needs in its workforce.

## **COURSE SEQUENCES**

In 8<sup>th</sup> grade, students now will pick one endorsement area to pursue in high school. The five “endorsement” areas are very broad categories of careers set by the state. Criminal Justice falls within the Public Service track.

To help 8<sup>th</sup> grade students choose an endorsement, they take a Career Cruising online personality/career test that will identify for them 40 possible career paths, based on their skills and interests.

In 9<sup>th</sup> grade, they will take the class Principles in Public Service that will introduce them to a broad variety of careers in public service. As sophomores in 10<sup>th</sup> grade, they will ask themselves, “What did I like most?” and narrow down their interests by selecting from classes on child development, hotel management/restaurant management, court systems and practices, or introduction to cosmetology. If none of these things interest them, they may select another endorsement.

As juniors, they’ll choose from Instructional Practices in Education and Training, Counseling and Mental Health, Culinary Arts, Forensic Science and Law Enforcement 1, and Cosmetology 1.

As seniors, they’ll take upper level courses: Practicum in Ed and Training, practicum in Human Service, practicum in Culinary, Law Enforcement 2, or Cosmetology 2.

This year is the first year WFISD is offering the Principles of Public Service course. It is a new class for WFISD. The Forensic science courses have been in WFISD for 2-3 years and have been very popular. This course is taught at all three high

schools. They use face recognition software, use slides with hair follicles, examine bullet casings, etc. “The students and teachers like it,” said Mrs. Wood.

Dan Buesing asked if she expected any changes from House Bill 5 legislation.

Mrs. Wood said the legislation allows students to explore their interests “while it’s still free to them.” The idea is to let them explore their options at a younger age. Many have no idea what careers exist for them. They don’t know the difference between a sheriff or a park ranger. The first class is designed to expose them to a lot of different careers. “I don’t think HB5 will go away,” she said.

Synthia Kirby said the TEKS (the state’s list of what must be taught in each class) are being updated for Fall 2017 along with instructional software.

Mrs. Wood stressed that the endorsements strategy set forth by HB 5 “is not about making students choose; it’s about giving them choices.”

Tyler Reed said, “It blows my mind that this stuff is available.”

Mrs. Wood agreed, saying that when students find a subject/career they like, they are more likely to stay in school.

## **ENROLLMENT**

The principles class for this endorsement is popular. There are 5 sections. Public Service at Rider enrolls 100 students; at WFHS, 100 students; and at Hirschi, 75 students.

This will be the first year for the Court Systems and Practices (sophomore) class. This year it will have 50 students from each school and be offered at each home campus. "Every kid has the same opportunities," said Mrs. Wood.

Mrs. Wood said she is trying to qualify a current court systems teacher. She has no one to teach law enforcement classes yet. About 14 students at each school have signed up for the 10<sup>th</sup> grade class Court Systems and Practices.

## **CURRICULUM**

The district will be buying new textbooks, but there are not a lot to choose from out there, said Mrs. Wood.

She will buy American Courts in Judicial Process. Students will learn how the courtroom system works, the processes, and the players. They will conduct mock trials...they will be exposed to everything from a Child Protective Services case to a traffic ticket.

Teachers will also use the TEKS from the state to guide their teaching.

There is no curriculum yet on law enforcement, she said.

A dream for this program would be for students to be able to test to work in a detention center at the age of 18. They can't carry a weapon until they are 21. The question is how to make them marketable and what can they do while they wait to turn 21?

Brien Conner said the ages of 18 to 21 provide a "big window of 'I-shouldn't-have-done-that'" opportunities.

Tyler Reed said that an employee must have a four-year degree to apply for his job.

You can work with us in the jail and work toward a degree, he said.

Dan Buesing said a person can learn a lot by being a jailer. You get close and personal to all the people who work in the courts. It's good experience that can transfer to the street.

Melvin Joyner said they could be working in DPS, as game wardens, CPS, detention down the line and apply for DPS or FBI. "Let them see the different sides of the agencies."

Manuel Borrego said people don't stick around if they graduate from Midwestern State University with a criminal justice degree.

Catherine Rudy said she observes students at MSU changing their minds a lot. "They want nursing but it's hard so they try radiology. Or they try criminal justice because their mom and dad said, 'Just get something.'" Her own daughter, at 26, just got a job as an adult probation officer after many twists and turns in her own life.

Kirk Wolfe said that to get a job in the juvenile system, you've got to be 21 years old. In criminal justice system, there are a lot of degrees that can take you into the federal system. You can be an accountant, for example. They can take CPAs and IT people, too. He added that wherever you are, writing skills are critical. It's so important for documentation. "Documentation is the name of the game," he said. "All of what we do is subject to the

court system. They want it written. In police work, you write social histories or you write incident reports as evidence.

Mr. Buesing said, "I concur."

Park ranger Tyler Reed said a criminal justice degree doesn't help a lot in his job. "Our academy teaches that," he said. "It doesn't matter your degree."

Mrs. Wood asked if seniors in high school could work as a jailer.

Mike Hopper said you can take the state test at 18 years of age. It would be good to get the Texas Jailer License, he said. You can become a peace officer at age 18 if you have 60 hours of college. A lot won't hire you yet, but it's the new rule. "Maturity's not there until about age 25, and for some not then even," he said.

Ms. Rudy said, "But their parents will call for them all through college."

They could work dispatch, said Mr. Hopper. "It takes major talent to be dispatch."

Mrs. Wood asked, "Would you hire a dispatcher who is 18?"

Mr. Borrego said he would. "There's a big turnover in dispatch because of stress."

Mike Hopper said a dispatch job will certainly teach a person what is going on in town. "And people think this town is nice and quiet and nothing happens...." A dispatch employee must

take a psychological and drug test. “Many officers started out in dispatch,” he said.

Mrs. Wood asked if Wichita Falls was low in people adept at crisis communication. “We have to grow our own people,” she said. “What are we stressing on?”

Mr. Wolfe said a graduate “could work at a probation center but to hire him as an officer, he’d have to have a degree.”

Mr. Buesing said, “At DPS, we have radio techs. We can’t keep up. We’ve got three radio techs in the whole state. They repair radios in your vehicle, your video, radio system.”

Such systems are used for pursuit, explained Mr. Reed. “Border patrol just switched to digital for all their dispatch. The border patrol needs help.”

Mr. Buesing said, “Our (repair) guys are army guys. They hit the ground running.” They repair radio camera systems, antennas.

Mrs. Wood said maybe IT computer programmers or audio video specialists could fill these holes. “We need to know what holes we are not filling.”

## **STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS**

- Skills USA
- National Technical Honor Society
- Citizen’s Police Officer (must be 18)
- Explorer program
- Crime Stoppers (Rider High School’s is active. It operates through the social studies department. It is unclear if

there is a similar group at Hirschi or Wichita Falls High School)

## **SUPPLIES**

The district is not purchasing much yet for its law enforcement program. More has been spent on forensic science because it is a science class.

The CTE Center will be a wonderful facility when it opens Fall 2017. Right now, with all the rain, construction workers are pumping water out of the area as they try to put the piers in.

The district wants to purchase a court bench so mock trials look like the real thing.

Mr. Hopper said the district might want to buy some defense tactical equipment, practice batons. How about a mini (jail) cell?

Park ranger officers must pass water survival tests that last two days.

There are all kinds of simulators, said Mrs. Wood. "It's all expensive."

The district might consider buying a court reporter machine that is electronic. "It's a pretty neat program. Once you learn the machine, you can get into closed captioning and do television stuff."

Mr. Hopper said you can train officers with cheap radios that they program themselves. Four-way radios were \$100 and have come down in price to about \$30.

Mr. Joyner said dispatching is done through the CAD database, which stands for Law Enforcement Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) Systems. “You’re typing while talking.” Students could be learning the CAD system.

Ms. Rudy asked, “Do we teach typing anymore?”

Mrs. Wood said no. “But we are trying to get it back into the curriculum.” Sixth-graders take “Tech apps” and this would be the spot where typing skills could be taught. Maybe it will be taught to 8<sup>th</sup> graders.

“They’ll have to learn to type in law enforcement,” said one.

## **SPECIAL POPULATIONS**

There is no gender bias in this field now. A lot of girls are enrolled in forensic class. “Women have better attention to detail,” said one.

The meeting ended at 3:05 p.m.