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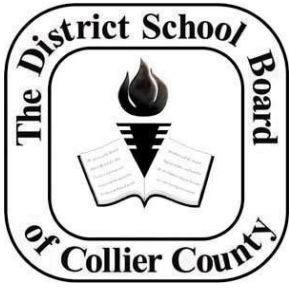
NEWS RELEASE – “ACCREDITATION STATUS OF *CLEARED* RECOMMENDED”

The School District of Collier County is being recommended for *CLEARED* accreditation status. The good news comes in the form of a letter to Superintendent Dennis L. Thompson which states that “The Special Review Team, upon the results of its review of the school system, recommends to the AdvancED Accreditation Commission to place the schools in Collier County Public Schools on accreditation *CLEARED* status. This accreditation status recognizes the progress of the school system over the past several months, but emphasizes that current efforts must be sustained.” The letter also states that “As a fully accredited school system, your schools and the community have made a commitment to meeting the standards for accreditation and a program of continuous improvement.” Formal action on the report will be taken by the AdvancED Accreditation Commission at its next scheduled meeting in June.

The *CLEARED* status recommendation is the result of last month’s visit to the district by an AdvanceED review team. Following an April 2007 AdvancED visit, the district was granted accreditation with *WARNED* status because of concerns about the School Board’s district accreditation standard indicators for governance. The team recommended that the School Board, the policy-making arm of the district, do a self-evaluation of its performance as a governing body. The team also recommended that the School Board develop an in-house effectiveness training program with the specific objective of improving its ability to work as a governing body, and that the board complete a comprehensive external review of its policies.

AdvancED is the unified organization of accrediting agencies including the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. All of Collier County’s public schools have been accredited individually for years. The school district first sought district-wide accreditation in 2007.

(MORE)



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“ACCREDITATION STATUS”

ADD ONE

The AdvancED Special Review Team, in its report, commends Collier County Public Schools for three strengths and accomplishments:

- The District School Board of Collier County has shown significant positive change in its behavior and operation as a governing board.
- Board members expressed enthusiastic responses to the training program.
- The post-board meeting sessions are powerful. They promote collaboration and a culture of improvement among board members.

The Special Review Team identified two recommendations for improvement:

- Include a continued focus on the growth and development of the board of education in the emerging strategic plan.
- Revise the board training plan in several ways.

In its report, the Special Review Team points out that the district is held accountable for addressing the actions identified in the report. In closing comments, the report states, “Truly the strong leadership of the superintendent and board chairman has had a great deal to do with changes in the board’s demeanor and operating efficiency. Evidence supports that structures are in place ‘not to quiet voices, but so all voices can be heard.’ The board has embraced both the AdvancED recommendations and requirements for improvement and the community’s mandate for improved board relations and operations.” Finally, the report states, “Practices for improvement must be systemic and strategically evaluated for the assurance of student success.”