



Tobacco Free Partnership of Dixie County



Date: December 8, 2023 Time: 12:00 pm

Location: Dixie County High School, 17924 SE Hwy 19, Cross City, Florida

Meeting Minutes

I. Welcome Partners & Guests – Chair and Co-Chair had last minute emergencies and could not attend. Lyndsey Whittington facilitated the meeting.

- Lyndsey Whittington, DCHS Vice-Principal
- Jan Gothier, FDOH- Dixie County
- Amy Jones, DCHS SWAT Advisor
- Melanie Anderson, QuitDoc Foundation, TFF Provider-Dixie County
- 20 DCHS SWAT Youth: S.M., E.E., A.W., K.G., Z.M., D.W., J.T., T.L., H.E., J.H., E.M., L.W., J.P., L.L., K.K., K.K., L.H., M.M., K.H., and L.R.

II. Old Business

- A. Lyndsey Whittington thanked the TFP for assisting with the Superintendent to get Dixie School Board K-12 Tobacco Policy Signs Posted around the district to promote the new policy to students, staff and visitors. 33 signs were posted at all entrances

III. New Business

- A) Melanie Anderson shared about the ongoing work on “Educating on Menthol Cigarettes.”
- Federal Menthol Legislation, at Office of Management Budget, could submit rule as is to the FDA, make changes to the rule and submit to the FDA or start completely over (most likely due to Politics during Election Year) There continues to be a need to educate local community members about the FDA Rule that will NOT punish the menthol cigarette smoker but will be addressing the industry.
 - FDA denied Vuse Alto Menthol and Mixed Berry flavors.
- B) Amanda NesSmith had given a report on the K-12 Comprehensive Tobacco Control Policy and Melanie Anderson shared the report with the partnership. The Dixie County School Board has voted to advertise a Policy Change – Prohibiting Accepting Gifts from the Tobacco Industry. The partnership discussed how they can support this change by sending a letter to the school board members to highlight the need to protect the Dixie County Students from Tobacco Industry marketing through gifts.

Lyndsey Whittington shared that a new program, Everfi, will be used with students as an Alternative to suspension. Three students have already begun the program. Lyndsey asked for volunteers from the SWAT youth to participate in completing this program to get feedback from students. Amy Jones shared that she has been working with the Henley Foundation on creating a Teen Court program for students who are caught with tobacco or vape as a second opportunity prior to suspension or expulsion.

Melanie Anderson shared information on the Tobacco Prevention Alternative to Suspension program and the American Lung Association program.

C) Tobacco Free Parks and Beaches (County and City Policies)

Melanie Anderson updated the partnership on HB495 in subcommittee (statewide tobacco free parks and beaches) She shared that the Partnership could assist by contacting the subcommittee lead to show support for this policy change. Students shared that they all had experiences of finding cigarette butts on beaches throughout the state of Florida.

Amanda NesSmith continues to follow-up on County Policy movement with the County Attorney. The most recent update was that the county commissioners approved to advertise the policy change prior to a vote.

The partnership members discussed the need to follow-up with County Commissioners who support a policy change.

Five SWAT youth volunteered to attend a training on how to speak to the Town of Cross City Council about a Tobacco Free Parks policy. J.T. shared that he has spoken to the Town Council before about needing lights at the park in his neighborhood. The council did approve his request and now the park has lights for the safety of the kids. He would be a great lead on speaking to the council. They will meet in the new year and plan the first town council meeting.

D) Jan Gothier shared about the training she, Paul Bennett Director Safety Facilities and Special Projects, Jennifer VanElla, District Bookkeeper will be attending to plan the 2024 Florida Youth Tobacco Survey. This will be the first year for each of them in their new positions. She stressed the need for this data and how it will help in Dixie County.

E) SWAT Reports

- i) Ruth Rains Middle School SWAT report by Jordan Butler, RRMS SWAT Advisor about the Club growth and the NALR event that they conducted.
- ii) Dixie County High School SWAT report was given by a SWAT officer that shared the NALR event that they created and shared at the DCHS Lunchroom.
- iii) Melanie Anderson gave the Dixie Learning Academy SWAT Club report. The new club had held a booth at the Dixie Learning Academies Fall Festival for NALR.

Due to the Partnership Chair and Co-Chair not being able to attend the meeting, the Quarter 3 TFP Meeting will be scheduled and shared later.