



**Envision Alachua Phase II**  
**East County Educators**  
**Committee**  
Summary of Meeting #2  
August 8, 2013

prepared by  
Rose Fagler, Plum Creek  
Albert White, consultant to Plum Creek  
December 2013

in support of the Envision Alachua  
process convened by Plum Creek





## **Background**

On April 11, 2013, Plum Creek convened the East County Educators Committee comprised of current and retired education professionals who have a focus on quality education from kindergarten through twelfth grade (K-12), as well as minority students. The Educators Committee is in direct response to the regular and consistent comments provided through the Envision Alachua process regarding education as it relates to quality of life and job readiness.

Envision Alachua is a community planning process to discuss future economic, environmental and community opportunities in Alachua County on lands owned by Plum Creek who is the largest private landowner in Alachua County with 65,000 acres. Nearly 24,000 of these acres are permanently conserved. The company's holdings are located throughout northern and eastern Alachua County. Plum Creek is considering future uses for its lands that could be aligned with community needs. Phase I of the process yielded a community vision, goals and guiding principles to guide Plum Creek's decision making as it explores potential opportunities for lands in East County that are suitable for uses other than timber. Phase II of the process yielded a community-shaped, long term master plan that incorporated the community's vision onto Plum Creek's land. The Educators Committee meeting is part of the effort to transition the Task Force vision from the Envision Alachua process into community preparation to act upon the economic opportunities that could be associated with an approved 50-year, long term master plan for Plum Creek's holdings within Alachua County.

The overall objectives for the Educators Committee is to discuss the situation of K-12 education within Alachua County, what are the strengths and areas of improvement within K-12, how does the education experience relate to job readiness, and what steps can be taken including partnership with other organizations in order to have students ready for job opportunities upon graduation from high school. On August 8, 2013, the second meeting of the East County Educators Committee was held. The objectives of the second meetings were:

- What do committee members want out of this group?
  - Determine the work product(s) of the committee and how those products will be used
  - Determine the community involvement of the committee and goals to achieve
- Discussion on the realities facing with percentage of students on free & reduced lunches, dropout rate
  - Can free & reduced lunch kids perform well?
  - Can the dropout rate be improved?

This document summarizes the general discussion comments made by the facilitators (Mr. Albert White and Mrs. Rose Fagler) and the Committee members during the August 8, 2013 meeting. It is intended only as a summary and should not be considered a transcription of the meeting. Meeting materials, information about the meeting will be posted at [www.envisionalachua.com](http://www.envisionalachua.com).

## **I. Welcome and Introductions**

Albert White, consultant to Plum Creek, opened the meeting welcoming the participants who self-introduced themselves while recognizing our Envision Alachua Task Force Member on the Committee (Dr. Karen Cole-Smith). Albert reviewed the meeting agenda sharing the desire to move from discussion to actionable results. He then introduced Rose Fagler, Manager of Community Relations Florida, Plum Creek, who provided a brief update on the Envision Alachua process and reviewed the meeting materials from meeting #1. Rose also mentioned that the Educators Committee would soon have its own page on the Envision Alachua website ([www.EnvisionAlachua.com](http://www.EnvisionAlachua.com)) to house all of the committee's materials, products and feature its efforts.

## **II. Additions to Meeting #1 Discussion**

Rose asked the group if there were any additional comments to the meeting #1 topics of discussion that committee members wanted to be captured. Albert then facilitated the discussion ensuring all of the committee members had the opportunity to provide input. Rose noted the points conveyed on a wall-sized piece of paper (photos of the notes are included in this report).

- What does 'job ready' mean?
  - Is it a grade achieved such as 'C or better'?
  - Students need to develop 'job ready' skills inclusive of the following
    - Job/technical skills – industry specific and general to all industries
      - How to write and manage a budget
      - Financial literacy
    - Communications skills
      - Knowing basics like Word, Excel, Outlook, Google Docs are helpful at most jobs
      - Email and phone etiquette
      - Interviewing and presentation skills
      - How to talk with employees, supervisors, peers
- The committee wanted to know 'what are we aiming for?' with this committee effort to be 'job ready'
  - What are the job categories?
  - What is the economic development plan?
- Who are the audiences for the committee's products
  - School Board of Alachua County (SBAC)

- PTAs
  - Santa Fe College (SFC)
  - Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce & Council of Economic Outreach, iG
    - Additional business community members
  - Florida Works
  - The University of Florida (UF)
  - Churches
- How formal do we get with this committee?
  - Do we continue as-is, do we merge into other efforts happening or do we do both
  - The committee thought it was too new to eliminate meeting altogether but it was anxious to begin doing measurable efforts as opposed to simply discussing issues and topics

### **III. Broad Discussion about the Realities Faced with Free-and-Reduced-Lunch Students and Dropout Rates**

Albert now led the committee in the meeting #2 topics of discussion. Committee members expressed the following

- There are four type of students
  1. College bound
  2. Work (career) bound
    - Some jobs only require a high school degree
  3. Military bound
    - Some students are better prepared for this choice because the military recruiters are in the schools explaining the military, what it offers
    - This is a good option for some students
  4. Technical and/or trade bound
    - Vocational or trade
    - Agriculture is a future choice again
    - Labor such as machinist, construction, trade
      - Apprenticeship programs are needed to be reinstalled
  5. Dropout student – there should be a realistic category for this student
    - The sad truth is we will always have some dropout students so we should be realistic and prepare for this
- Awareness (to the future work environments) is key
  - No one is telling the students what their options are for life after school
  - These days, guidance counselors spend 95% of their time doing assessment testing
    - Kids don't even meet with their assigned counselors anymore
  - It's not the old model of where the guidance counselor discusses colleges, trade schools, job opportunities and helps students determine the best career direction

- Need to set realistic expectations with parents and students
  - Some parents don't want to think their child isn't going to become (for example) a college athlete
    - Some parents have had a bad school experience so they approach their kid's school experience with that view
    - These parents are not supportive of schools and teachers
  - Parents are the biggest challenge
    - Parents impact kids who are failing or dropping out
    - Reaching the parents needs to begin in middle school or earlier
- Labeling a student is hurtful if it labels the student as unable to learn
  - All kids can learn
  - We are forcing students into the wrong directions
- Revisit programs – teachers and guidance counselors need to be aware of the opportunities and the skills necessary to meet the opportunities
  - Teacher trips to military bases to introduce programs to students
  - Reinstigate the school-to-work program
    - Teacher apprenticeships to learn the requirements
    - Teachers can then teach the requirements
  - Institute SECME – Science, Engineering, Communications and Math Excellence
    - Critical and creative thinking is needed
    - Creative and technical writing skills are needed
  - Business community needs to be engaged in the education process
    - Education can meet the business needs if business would tell us their needs and work with us to meet those needs
- How do we align the education program with the job opportunities?

### **III. Goals for the Committee**

The committee identified the following goals to achieve helping to refine and broaden the discussion as well as to begin to collaborate with other entities working on the subject of education-to-job-readiness.

1. Meet with SBAC for its strategic planning efforts
2. Meet with iG for its efforts to align education with job needs
3. Find resources to meet the needs
  - a. Look at other programs around the U.S. to find best practices and innovative approaches to use here
4. Define 'job ready' so education can then seek to meet that status
5. Work towards instituting Career Guidance Counselors in the school system

#### **IV. Summary & Next Steps**

The committee wants to meet with the SBAC and iG concerning sharing its knowledge, concerns and solution suggestions as these entities are working on improving the education process. Rose and Albert will work to get those meetings scheduled for the committee.

## East County Educators Committee Members

*\*Denotes attended meeting*

### **Nykki Barnes**

Immediate Past President  
Alachua County PTA

### **Lawson Brown – Principal**

Duval Elementary School

### **Linda Butler\***

Rawlings Elementary School (retired)

### **Betty Calhoun\***

Buchholz High School Teacher

### **Aaron Carter**

Kanapaha Middle School

### **Veita Jackson-Carter – Principal\***

Hawthorne Middle and High Schools

### **Dr. Karen Cole-Smith\***

Santa Fe College, Envision Alachua Task Force Member

### **Carrie Davis\***

Eastside High School

### **Debra Fields\***

FW Buchholz High School

### **Dr. Bessie Jackson**

Gainesville High School (retired)

### **Dr. Simon Johnson**

Caring & Sharing Learning Schools, Inc.

### **Verna Johnson**

Caring & Sharing Learning Schools, Inc.

### **Jean Kiner**

Caring & Sharing Learning Schools, Inc.

### **Leonard Marshall**

Rawlings Elementary School

### **Clarence Polke\***

Gainesville Job Corps/LMS

### **Jacqueline Polke\***

Eastside High School

### **Ellen Rush\***

Retired Teacher

### **James Speer**

Horizon Center

### **Angela Terrell**

Alachua County Elementary Schools (retired)  
Gainesville Association for the Creative Arts

### **Janie Williams\***

Retired Teacher  
Past Member of School Board of Alachua County

### **Rhonda Wilson**

Duval Elementary

### **Dr. Gladys Wright**

Chester Shell Elementary School (retired principal), Envision Alachua Task Force Member

### **Educators Committee Member Representing Plum Creek**

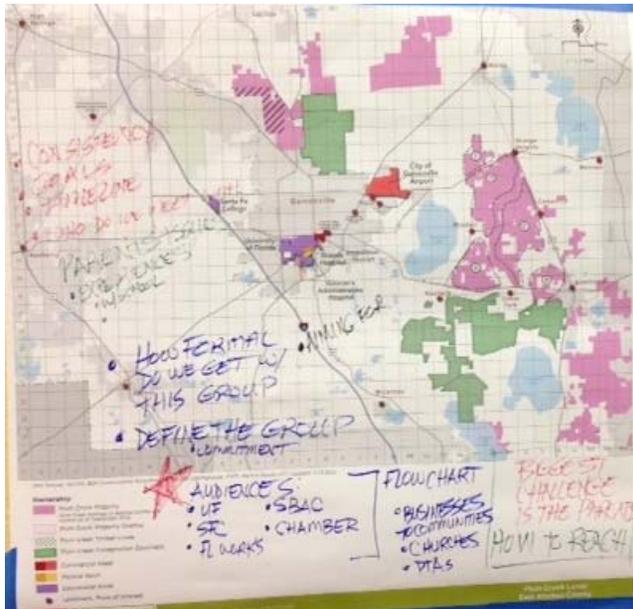
### **Rose Fagler\***

Manager Community Relations  
Plum Creek, Envision Alachua Task Force Member

### **Consultant**

### **Albert White\***

Community Relations Consultant



### EDUCATORS' COMMITTEE #2 AUG 8, 2013

- NO ONE IS TELLING THE STUDENTS WHAT THEIR OPTIONS ARE: COLLEGE, WORK, MILITARY, TRADE
- HOW WILL WE ALIGN THE EDUCATION PROGRAM
- WHO IS THE AUDIENCE FOR THE COMMITTEE'S PRODUCT
- JOB READY = C OR BETTER?
  - DEVELOPED SKILLS
  - JOB/TECHNICAL SKILLS
  - COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS
- 4 TYPES STUDENTS
  - COLLEGE BOUND
  - WORK BOUND
  - MILITARY BOUND - BETTER PREPARED FOR CHOICE
  - TECHNICAL BOUND - TRADE, VOCATIONAL
    - AGRICULTURE
    - TRUCK JOBS
    - MACHINIST
    - CONSTRUCTION
    - TRADE
    - APRIL REPAIRS
- WHAT ARE WE AIMING FOR?
  - DETERMINES
  - HOW TO REACH
- REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS OF PARENT & STUDENT
  - NEED TO START IN MIDDLE SCHOOL OR EARLIER
- AWAWARENESS IS KEY!
  - REVISIT PROGRAMS
    - ASSOC. W/ MILITARY
      - TEACHERS TRIPS TO MILITARY BASES & INTRODUCE PROGRAMS TO STUDENTS
    - SCHOOL TO WORK PROGRAM
      - TEACHER APPRENTICESHIPS TO LEARN REQUIREMENTS
      - TEACHER CONSTRUCTED PROGRAMS
    - SECME - SCIENCE, ENGINEERING, COMMUNICATIONS, MATH EXCELLENCE
- GUIDANCE COUNSELORS NEED TO BE ENGAGED
- BUSINESS COMMUNITY ENGAGED W/ EDUCATION
- FIND PROGRAMS ANSWERING THE NEEDS IN TOWN OF EMPLOYERS, STUDENTS, PARENTS

Envision Alachua – East County Educators Committee – Meeting #2 Notes – August 8, 2013 Meeting