



The future for Pasco students will include preparation to become effective learners in a diverse, global environment.

Introduction

The Pasco County Vision Committee has been working on developing ideas for how students will learn in the 21st Century and continuing to prepare these students for reaching their highest potential in a global learning environment. The learner-centered focus has driven them to think about change across the Pasco County School system. Yet, this was balanced with a continued belief in supporting the district's three guiding principles: continuous progress, continuity of care, and equity and excellence. This collaborative work has been conducted first through the examination of district-wide data, committee work, and moodle postings. This effort has been a multi-year project that included the participation of every level of stakeholder within the school district. These diverse perspectives are represented in the narrative that follows.

Pasco County Schools in 2020

The Pasco County Vision Committee has embarked upon a multi-year project to consider what Pasco County education should look like in the future, what students should learn as we move deeper into the 21st Century, and what it will mean for students to meet or exceed academic standards in a global learning environment. The committee includes representation of every stakeholder group within the district—students, teachers, administrators, parents, community members, school resource personnel, and school board members. Broad representation and deep wells of life experience provide diverse perspectives in the collaborative work framed in the picture below. Committee members reviewed district data, the district's current vision document, and the district's strategic plan as they articulated the vision for Pasco schools in 2020. The Pasco County Vision Committee has embraced the future!

The future for Pasco students will include preparation to become effective learners in a diverse, global environment. As Pasco schools continue to educate the whole child, students will develop a healthy and safe lifestyle, academic curiosity, and effective social skills. Students will engage in collaboration, benefiting from learning in a variety of flexible and diverse groups. Students will engage in discovery and problem solving—exploring unknown information, synthesizing the information to find solutions to problems, and communicating the results in a way that is appropriate to any given audience. They will benefit from ongoing communication with experts in a variety of fields. Rigorous inquiry and critical thinking will deepen students' knowledge of academic content.

Students will find schools responsive to their needs—which may include extended learning time during or after the school day. Educational options will include a flexible schedule, which permits students to attend when they need to be there and the incorporation of Pasco eSchool courses during or after the traditional school day. Virtual courses will be available at all levels: elementary, middle, and high. Students will find opportunities to accelerate their learning via virtual online classes, advanced placement courses, and dual enrollment courses. These opportunities will assist in preparation for post-secondary (college or career) experiences: career preparation, career and technical academies, trade or apprentice programs, or college readiness programs.

Pasco teachers will learn from each other through a cycle of inquiry and reflection. This will happen in a variety of ways including: face-to-face staff development, instructional coaching, online professional development, and lesson study. Educators will work in high functioning collaborative teams, agreeing on what students need to learn, based on a standards-driven curriculum, and continually assessing the progress of student learning. Teachers will have thorough knowledge of what a child knows and is capable of doing, using data to plan for next steps in learning with student goal setting. This will increase the level of individualized instruction for our diverse population of Pasco students. Grading practices will reflect true student learning and show mastery of content and skills demonstrated by authentic tasks. Teachers will use rubrics to establish expectations and define student responsibilities in order to assure transparency in grading.

Future Pasco administrators will be focused on instructional leadership—building the capacity of teachers to engage students in standards-based curriculum, supporting teachers’ work in professional learning communities focused on student learning, and using data to make decisions and to monitor progress toward goals. Administrators will make decisions relating to the scheduling of students’ and teachers’ time based on student learning needs. Administrators will be accountable for student achievement and will be ambassadors of the school and district, working closely with parents and community members to promote the school, the district, and its vision.

The parents and community members will be focused on strengthening the connections between schools and the communities in which they are located. The vision is for a connected community, a community of learners (parents, students, and teachers), where service-learning projects connect children and adults to their community, where the community and companies partner to support workforce preparation and mentor programs, and where schools serve as community centers. Shifting to the community school focus will result in expanded use of school facilities—classes being offered outside of traditional school hours, community events scheduled on school campuses, school media centers serving as

community libraries, theaters used for fine arts programs, school sports and pool facilities being used for intramural sports and park activities. Offering services such health clinics, day care programs, adult learning opportunities, and parent and family education will support the vision of the school as a community center. School buildings will become the community habitats for both adult and child learning across the span of life.

While bricks and mortar school sites will continue to be important centers of learning, Pasco’s schools of the future will embrace virtual learning and will integrate emerging technological advances as they occur. The school district will provide the infrastructure, bandwidth, and hardware needed for all students to collaborate globally. Students will use their Digital Educational Student Console, or “DESC,” to manage and complete their assignments. Students and teachers will be able to create and share ideas and content using professional, academic, and social networking tools. Traditional textbooks will be replaced by a variety of digital media that will be widely available and easily accessible to teachers and students. Pasco’s schools of the future will increase global connectivity, embrace the blended (virtual and face-to-face) classroom environment, move toward eco-friendly paperless courses where work is submitted electronically.

As we embrace the future and all that will come with it, Pasco’s learner-focused orientation continues to be the highest priority. Pasco schools will continue to strive for excellence and to seek equity for all.

