



SUPERINTENDENT'S PERSONNEL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

December 10, 2009

Minutes

Present:

Monica Hendricks, Dearington Elementary School for Innovation; Chris Smith, Perrymont Elementary School; Janet Jacovitch, Department of Transportation; Eric Dragan, Paul Laurence Dunbar Middle School for Innovation; Verna Lamb, Robert S. Payne Elementary School; Kelly Ward, Heritage Elementary School; Natasha Yeoman, Sheffield Elementary School; Nancy Johnson, Sandusky Middle School; Carolyn Brown, Sandusky Elementary School; Kim Beuerle, Lynchburg Education Association; Brenda Colinger, Amelia Pride Center; Bert Horsley, E. C. Glass High School; Aaron Mabery, E. C. Glass High School; Rachel Espinosa, Linkhorne Elementary School; Gretchen Morgan, Linkhorne Middle School; Jennifer Kerns, LAUREL Regional School/Nurse and Health Assistants; Melissa Markland, Thomas C. Miller Elementary School for Innovation; Beth Coleman, Heritage High School; Mark Mear, Heritage High School; Carolyn Martin, Hutcherson Early Learning Center; Ruth Anne McCarthy, Paul Munro Elementary School; Linda Irwin, Bedford Hills Elementary School; Brian Wray, Secondary Principals; Pamela Smith-Johnson, Assistant Director of Personnel; Ralph Hayes, Supervisor of Environmental Services; Paul McKendrick, Superintendent; Wendie Sullivan, Recording Secretary

The Superintendent's Personnel Advisory Committee met in the Board Room at the School Administration Building beginning at 3:45 p.m. Dr. McKendrick opened the meeting by explaining the structure of the meetings and thanking everyone for their participation.

The following questions and topics were discussed during the meeting.

- 1. The school secretaries would like to request that special consideration be given to exempting our position as part of the requirements for Kronos. The position of a school secretary has a variety of demands placed upon us which vary greatly from other secretarial positions. As we arrive to school each day, we are required to handle a variety of different situations, which sometimes prevent us from clocking in. The same applies to the end of the day as we are often too busy answering phone calls, assisting parents/visitors, meeting buses that bring students back to school, etc.**

An exemption to using Kronos for the school secretaries will enable us to continue our great customer service without having to interrupt a parent, student, volunteer or staff members to clock out. Thank you for considering this important and needed request.

School secretaries are classified as non-exempt employees under the Fair Labor Standards Act, and therefore, the school division must comply with that federal law.

2. Why do we hire teacher assistant subs if we have to do their duties with them? (Playground duty and cafeteria)

Substitute teacher assistants are to perform the duties of the teacher assistant for whom they are substituting, and therefore, help the school to continue operating efficiently. The school division does not require teachers to help the substitute teacher assistants with those duties. That is a building-level decision and should be directed to the principal or the leadership team at the building.

3. Why are we required to attend the United Way fund raising presentation? This took away from planning time, and it is not directly related to our job descriptions. Why is United Way allowed to fund raise during school hours, but other organizations are not allowed that same privilege?

The United Way of Central Virginia provides a number of services through a network of agencies that support the families and students of the Lynchburg community. The school division works with the United Way during its annual campaign by inviting representatives to present information to faculty and staff. Unless the presentation is during a faculty meeting, staff is not required to attend those presentations.

4. What is the LCS policy on requiring teachers to attend PTO meetings? Some principals only require unit leaders to attend; some require a teacher to attend a certain number per year; some require teachers to attend every meeting.

While there is no school board policy that requires teachers to attend PTO meetings, principals have the discretion to ask teachers to attend those meetings. This is a building-level decision and should be discussed with the principal or addressed with the school's leadership team.

5. What is the LCS policy on requiring teachers to attend weekend school functions? Our school had a PTO fall festival and teachers were required to show up for 1-2 hours on a Saturday. This caused some teachers to cancel plans such as church conferences, out of town family activities or VA Tech football games.

Please see the answer to question number four. Hopefully, principals will work with staff members who have made plans prior to those events.

- 6. Why are some churches allowed to advertise their activities through the school system, such as Halloween events? Why isn't there separation of church and state? It seems that if you let a few churches advertise, all churches should have that same privilege. It appears that we are getting an increase of printed materials from many organizations to put into student mailboxes, including businesses such as Skateland. Why are selected businesses allowed free access to our students? This may seem a small issue, but stuffing mailboxes takes up planning time. We also seem to be getting an increasing number of these fliers that need to go home "today" rather than in the Monday folders, requiring us to stop what we are doing to meet these deadlines. Many of these fliers are not arriving at our schools in a timely, convenient manner.**

The superintendent approves requests received to distribute flyers to students. Typically, requests related to church services or religion-based activities are denied. Non-profit organizations that provide services to students free-of-charge, such as a Halloween party in a safe environment, or other such activities may be approved. Further, approval of a flyer does not mean that teachers are required to meet deadlines or take planning time to ensure that those flyers go home with students.

- 7. Since a budget shortfall is once again going to be an issue in the upcoming year, one option to save money would be to allow teachers to opt for part-time (1/2 day) teaching positions. Doing so would allow 2 teachers to stay within the division for every 1 position that is split in this manner. In addition, it would save the division on some benefit costs (i.e. VRS and health). It may not be a choice many teachers would make, but if there are enough it could save jobs and potentially money.**

The school administration will consider this option as it gathers information to present to the school board during the development of the school operating budget for 2010-11. At this point, no information has been received by the governor regarding the proposed budget for next year. That information should be available December 18, 2009. Also, the city manager has recommended that all city departments reduce their budgets by 10 percent, which is a \$3.5 million reduction for schools.

- 8. At the December 10th Superintendent's Personnel Advisory Committee meeting can you ask about tuition reimbursement? It was reinstated, but supposedly there is a new form in the process of being developed. What is the status?**

The Department of Personnel is in the process of developing new forms for this program. It was noted that the new procedures will require staff to seek approval for reimbursement prior a taking the class.

- 9. Why can't the 4:00 academic/activity bus arrive before 4:30-5:00? It is getting to school later and later and it is very inconsistent.**

Much of this is due to the availability of school bus drivers who wish to work beyond their contracted schedule. Also, some of the drivers who support the activity bus runs are not finished with elementary school runs until 4:00 p.m. The Department of Transportation works diligently to ensure that there are drivers available and that they arrive for activity bus runs as close to 4:00 p.m. as possible.

- 10. Winter Break - If an employee has not accumulated the two (2) mandatory days to take during the break, will they have to be "DOCKED"?**

Employees who do not have the accumulated days will receive a dock in their pay.

- 11. During the recent preparations for federal monitoring it was brought to our attention that teacher assistants are not to handle or have access to student permanent record folders. Teacher assistants at various buildings (including ours) have helped at certain times with some filing during the year and at times have helped with some organization of records at the end of the year. This has certainly not been a major duty of T.A.'s since they usually are working with students. Since teacher assistants go through training and have their own certification and are obviously entrusted with teaching our students, why can they not have permission to handle student folders?**

Permission for access to students records is limited to instructional staff on a "need to know" basis. "Need to know" is defined as those who instruct the student.

- 12. If we must start after Labor Day next year, can we lump the teacher workdays and professional development days in late August before the students arrive and schedule the students to get out no later than mid-June? Here are some very specific objections to the idea of going any later than mid-June.**

PROBLEMS FOR STUDENTS

- 1) Missed opportunities to participate in workshops, such as the Congressional Seminar--a free one-week session in DC to winners of the Colonial Dames contest**
- 2) Missed work opportunities if employers need summer help earlier than late June (which most do)--especially jobs which specifically begin in mid-June, such as all-day lifeguards and swim coaches**
- 3) Missed opportunities to attend summer camps (of all sorts)**
- 4) Missed opportunities to be full participants on summer sports teams, especially city-wide swim teams**
- 5) Missed opportunities for graduating seniors to attend early college orientations in which they have the best chance of getting the schedule they want (before everything is full)**

PROBLEMS FOR TEACHERS

- 1) Missed opportunities to attend quite a few summer professional development activities, including summer school courses, state SOL committees, NEH and other seminars/institutes**
- 2) Missed employment opportunities for teachers wanting (NEEDING) summer jobs that actually begin as soon as most area schools are out**
- 3) Difficulty in recruiting teachers who would prefer the various counties' schedules to ours (This is actually a much bigger factor than some administrators might think!)**
- 4) Extended daycare for teachers with young children which is a greater cost, especially without salary increases**

The school calendar is based on what is instructionally best for students; however, this information will be considered during the development of the school calendar for 2010-11.

- 13. College students need community service hours as well as actual classroom hours. I am proposing that we use college juniors and seniors as our substitutes. This requires no additional expense to our division. In fact, we will not just save money because they will not be paid for the day, we will also save money in paperwork, fingerprinting, and background checks, as we do not complete any of these things for our student teaching candidates. This is a win-win situation for everyone involved. Lynchburg City Schools can be the first division to offer “real” classroom experience for college juniors and seniors. We will be innovators in the field of truly “Highly Qualified” substitute candidates. I see so many different advantages and opportunities not only for our students, but our communities as well. Eliminating substitutes will save the division \$800, 000 per year.**

Student teachers are required to be supervised by a teacher as part of their classroom experience. College students, if placed in charge of students, will also need background checks and TB tests in order to work with students. This would be a cost to the school division.

The meeting adjourned at 4:46 p.m.

The next Superintendent’s Personnel Advisory Committee meeting will occur on February 4, 2010, at 3:45 p.m. in the Board Room at the School Administration Building.