

Teacher Advisory Committee
11.10.15 – 3:30 p.m.
Minutes

Present:

Cartner, Larry (Superintendent)
Bundy, Christy (CES)
Hyder, Sheena (JCS)
Prayer, Jessica (NES)
Banks, Dena' (PES)
Hinton, Joycelyn (PWM)
Jackson, Kristin (SH)
Santana, Myraida (WES)

Walton, Carolyn (ECMS)
Jeffcoat, Norma (RRMS)
Jackson, Tameka (RRMS)
James, Jennifer (NHS)
Rountree (PCHS)
Davis, Linda (HLTCS)
Meiggs, Dianne (Human Resources)
Sanders, Joanne (Curriculum&Instruction)

Dr. Cartner provided time for individuals to review the responses to questions/concerns that had been submitted prior to today's meeting.

Dr. Cartner welcomed TAC members and thanked them for submitting questions prior to the meeting.

Dr. Cartner asked if the group had questions or need clarification on any of the Q&A information.

Santana asked about honor roll criteria and Connect grades.

Sanders responded that principals voted on the criteria for honor roll & Superintendent's Academic Team and clarified that Connect grades are not part of honor roll or SAT.

Jackson commented on a question asked about test day questions/codes and indicated that once the benchmark is open teachers can log on and get codes.

Jackson asked if 5th grade science fair is a district level requirement.

Sanders indicated principals have been asked for input and will vote on the final decision.

A question was asked regarding year round schools and if it would be something the district or board would consider.

Dr. Cartner responded that while it is a good question, he cannot answer at this point.

A question was asked regarding the possibility of extending the school day and having a four-day week which would allow more time for families to spend together.

Dr. Cartner responded that we have to meet state mandated times/days and a four day school week would make for a long student day. He shared that the Midwest states that follow this schedule do not have mandated hours/days.

A question was asked regarding assistant principals and if they could expect a token of appreciation such as what was given to principals recently.

Dr. Cartner responded that this would be reviewed.

Dr. Cartner reviewed chart showing teacher attendance on the October 30th optional teacher workday. He shared that one of the things heard at the required PD days was teachers wanted time in their classrooms and the chart shows by school that 60% of our teachers took advantage of the time to work in their classroom. He indicated the number choosing to take the day off was lower than expected.

There was a question about why some days are “optional” and some are “required.”

Dr. Cartner indicated that the calendar law requires two days be available for 10-month staff to have the option to take annual leave.

A question was asked if the rule applied to Central Services staff.

Dr. Cartner indicated that the law differs for 12-month employees.

A question was asked about STAR time and if a teacher takes leave on an optional workday does that affect the STAR time.

Dr. Cartner indicated it would not.

A question was asked if perhaps people take off just because they want to use their leave days.

Meiggs commented on saving leave days for retirement conversion.

Several individuals indicated they did not know leave days could apply to retirement or that upon separation of service you could be paid for up to 30 days of annual leave. Dr. Cartner encouraged everyone to become familiar with the benefits provided regarding leave days.

A comment was made by a member that the reasoning behind not taking days off is because we want data to change; we want changes in classroom; and that it is hard to see the data, but it is a reality.

Discussion of Teacher Survey Responses:

Question 1 “Things I believe ECPPS does well”

Walton/Jeffcoat/Jackson/Simmons prepared a handout for their research and shared that the following were common themes in the survey responses for question #1:

- The “we did well” comments were not about students

- The ILT process is done well
- Lot of connection in working with the community
- Many of the positive comments were counteracted by negative comments on the same topic later in the survey

Question 2 “Things or actions I believe can make ECPPS even better”

James & Rountree reported on their research. Common themes in the responses for question #2 were:

- Promotion of the schools
- Professional development
- Consistency in Schools (teachers, administrators, etc.)(if you have rules need to follow them)
- Time to work with other teachers / more planning time
- Cell phone issue (middle/high school)
- Need more technology
- Communication (lack / disconnect)
- Would like to see grant writer for system
- Holding students more accountable
- Consistently behind other districts / need to be more in line with similar districts

Dr. Cartner asked the group, based on what they heard, to identify the most important things that will make the most difference.

Responses were:

- Consistency in dealing with discipline issues
- Student attendance (accountability) – the group discussed attendance issues; number of allowed students absences (not enforced); truancy;

Dr. Cartner discussed days in membership and accountability in the testing program. A student has to be enrolled in school 140 days on the first day of the spring testing in order for the scores to count and has to be enrolled for 70 days in a semester in order for the scores to count.

Renee Harris, Director of Testing/Accountability, confirmed the days enrolled requirement and shared that if a student was enrolled at ECMS for 80 days and at RRMS for 60 days the scores would not count for a school, but would count for the district.

Dr. Cartner shared that the district is in the process of making a stronger effort to involve the courts in truancy issues.

Santana asked what are the guidelines for students with health issues, what can we expect from a child with no medical letters.

Dr. Cartner asked her to put that down as a question for next month, so we can get an accurate answer..

Dr. Cartner indicated they would continue discussion of the Teacher Survey Responses from June 2015 at the next meeting.

He shared with the group that preliminary work has begun on the 2016-17 school. Based on calendar requirements and the way the days fall it is going to be a challenging calendar to design.

Dr. Cartner asked for feedback they are hearing from colleagues about the two days of PD held this year. Responses were:

Half day in morning and time in classrooms in afternoons may be better

Afternoon presenters are not given attention

If staff could meet with their school colleagues for the second half of the day to share, that would be good

Not able to meet with grade level and just plan

Dr. Cartner commented that he was hearing that the golden mean for PD is half day PD and work in classrooms for half day.

The meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.