

Teacher Advisory Council
9.20.16 – 3:30 p.m.
Minutes

Present:

Cartner, Larry
(Superintendent)

Lassiter, Steve (Asst.
Superintendent)

Sanders, Joanne (Chief
Academic Officer)

Boone-Thompson, Elsie
(NES)

Davis, Linda (HLTCS)

Fulford, Monica (CES)

Griffith, Millie (ECMS)

Hinton, LaQuitta (SHES)

Hughes, Shelby (ECMS)

Jackson, Sarah (PWM)

Jackson, Kristin (NCAE)

James, Wayne (NHS)

James, Jennifer (NHS)

Lilley, Linda (JCS)

Palmer, Alicia (RRMS)

Rountree, Eugene
(PCHS)

Russell, John (PCHS)

Santana, Myraida
(WES)

Sutton, Katrina (PES)

Wooten, Elizabeth
(RRMS)

Dr. Cartner opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the first Teacher Advisory Council meeting for 2016-17.

The following handouts were provided:

- TAC Guidelines
- List of District Contacts
- Organizational Chart
- Teacher Advisory Council Q&A (questions submitted prior to meeting)

Dr. Cartner indicated that individuals should consider the meeting a safe environment and encouraged them to feel free to ask questions or make comments. Questions that are asked will not be shared individually with principals, but will be reported in the overall Q&A document without naming a school. He reminded everyone that school-level concerns should be addressed with the principal and district-level concerns/questions should be brought to TAC .

Dr. Cartner provided time for everyone to review the responses to questions submitted prior to the meeting and indicated he will email the document to them following the meeting.

Dr. Cartner asked for questions/concerns.

Question: Will academic coaches receive stipends (ex. Quiz Bowl, Mock Trial, etc.)?

Dr. Cartner responded that there are some funds for stipends in the local budget, however, the line item had to be cut during budget reductions. He shared that the local budget had to be reduced by \$1.4 million and all areas were touched in some way.

Sanders shared that principals received information about stipends last week and they will determine how the funds are distributed. Dr. Cartner reminded everyone the responsibility of determining how to use funds allocated to a school rests with the principal.

Concern: Teachers indicate Engage NY (math resource) requires a significant amount of paper usage and there is a need for training.

Sanders responded that the new technology platform provided to core classroom teachers included a document camera and the cameras should be used instead of copying every sheet of paper. She has talked with principals about the need for paper if one teacher is assigned to teach all math for the grade level. She indicated individuals should discuss paper allotments with their principal. She shared that the Program Services Team is addressing Engage NY in grade level meetings.

TAC members commented on the shortage of books and limiting the number of copies at the school level. Copy numbers and amounts are set by the principal. Dr. Cartner indicated that as we go further into the school year, we will experience more and more issues as a result of the budget reductions – it was impossible not to touch schools when \$1.4 million had to be cut. The district has fixed costs that (utilities, gas, etc.) that have to be paid and the only areas to choose for reduction were people or programs. He asked the TAC representatives to help their colleagues understand the issue when questions/comments arise.

Concern: Students are choosing to not stand during the Pledge of Allegiance and there is a sense of uneasiness regarding that.

Dr. Cartner responded that it is their right not to stand.

Question: What happens if student groups are requested to participate in a community event after the deadline for field trips has passed (ex. chorus, band, ROTC, etc.).

Dr. Cartner responded that the teacher should submit one field trip form by the deadline that lists “Community Service” / “Dates Vary” and work with the principal on an as needed basis.

Question: What is the district stance on student profiling as it relates to student information on index cards?

Sanders asked if the cards were being used on the Data Wall and the individual responded they were. Dr. Cartner indicated the district does not support “profiling” and asked if the cards were part of the school’s PLC and Data Wall. If individuals are uncomfortable with the practice and are not willing as individuals to approach the principal, he suggested going through the School Improvement Team to get the topic on the table for discussion. He reminded everyone that the Teacher Working Conditions Survey asks if there is a process in the school for resolving conflict and TAC Representatives should encourage their colleagues to take initiative and approach the principal or SIT.

Dr. Cartner asked if the group had received much feedback on the district providing new technology for core classroom teachers and the case of paper provided at the beginning of the year. Representatives indicated it was much appreciated.

Question: The laptops provided to not have Microsoft Office and it can be difficult to download/convert resources that are Word or PDF (esp. from DPI) to Google. Is there a possibility that the minimal package for Microsoft Office could be installed?

Dr. Cartner responded that it is a matter of funding and how many staff positions would folks be willing to give up to pay for Microsoft Office. He encouraged contacting the school Technology Assistant and/or Amber Godfrey with specific concerns. Ms. Godfrey tracks the amount of feedback she receives on topics to make informed decisions for the Technology Department. It was asked if individuals could have their own Microsoft Office software installed and Dr. Cartner indicated they could not. The district as a whole has to protect the network and installing personal products could cause issues.

Question: Has the plan for one-half of the 9.26.16 and 10.31.16 required workdays to be used for time in classrooms been communicated to principals?

Dr. Cartner responded that the intent of scheduled early release days was for school-level professional development and the required teacher workdays on September/October would be used for district level professional development. To respond to feedback from teachers last year, the district level professional development has been scheduled for ½ day on 9/26 and 10/31 in order to support teachers with time to work in classrooms.

Question: When is the field trip request cut off and does the district have a van/small bus for field trips?

Dr. Cartner responded that the deadline for first semester has passed (it was September 9th). The deadline for second semester is January 6th. He indicated State guidelines govern the type of vehicle used for transporting students.

Question: Has there been any consideration for purchasing consumable for Engage NY (math curriculum)?

Sanders responded that the district has not considered purchasing consumables. Dr. Cartner indicated schools were given ample funds for instructional supplies/materials and encouraged individuals to discuss purchasing decisions with their principals.

Question: Can you explain the calls/e-mail we have received about surveys (parent and staff)?

Sanders indicated the surveys are part of the accreditation process through AdvancED and responses will be used to analyze data and formulate a plan to address areas that schools and/or the district do not meet expectations. She indicated the responses are anonymous and encouraged participation. She shared that the district needs a minimum response rate of 20%.

Question: Is the length of the work day for teachers up to principals?

Dr. Cartner responded that teachers have to remember based on the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) they are salaried employees and their day ends when the work is done. He indicated he understands most folks work beyond the scheduled day and he tries to let teachers leave early on the day before a holiday (ex. Labor Day).

A comment was made about the 2nd Chance Breakfast (Grab and Go) available this year and that it is a positive opportunity for students to take advantage of.

Question: Would it be possible for those programs (ex. Band, ROTC, etc.) with Facebook pages to be able to access Facebook through the district network? Frequently it is the most effective way to communicate with parents and staff cannot access it through the district network.

Dr. Cartner responded that he would think about it and investigate the ramifications of opening that door.

Question: Will there be restructuring of staff to accommodate the large number of EC students in certain schools.

Dr. Cartner indicated the EC Director, Lisa Ewers, had restructured the program to better meet the program needs of students and there was not a large increase in the number of students. The issue is that there has been difficulty in hiring certified staff for open positions. Ms. Ewers and the HR Department are working hard to fill vacancies. He encouraged contacting Ms. Ewers with specific concerns.

Question: The ESL student population is growing and there are instances of some parents that speak no English. Who is the district contact for ESL?

Sanders responded that Julie Mansfield can assist with ESL concerns.

Dr. Cartner closed by saying the group is important to him and he counts on them to keep him abreast of what is happening in classrooms. He commented that he understands when he refers folks back to the principal it may be frustrating, but that is where school-level decisions have to be made. He indicated he will be available for private questions or comments following the close of the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 4:24 p.m.