

Non-Certified Advisory Council Meeting
November 8, 2016
Minutes

Present:

Cartner, Larry	Chauvin, Lauri	Nolan, Brenda
Heath, Frank	Christian, Shanae	Odum, Kenny
Parker, Alvin	Gregory, Jacquette	Rhodes, Joy
Thompson, Michael	Griffin, Marvinia	Self, Amy
Abbitt, Jenny	Herring, Shelly	Storey, Danielle
Banerjee, Nandita	Johnson, Shirley	Townsend, Patricia
Blackmon, Susan	Johnson, Wanda	Waterfield, Judy
Bogue, Cheryl	Lavoie, Debbie	
	Moore, Kerrie	

Dr. Cartner opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending. He indicated there were no district level questions submitted prior to the meeting and that he responded to a couple of "individual" questions via e-mail

Dr. Cartner discussed the e-mail he sent and the article in today's edition of *The Daily Advance* regrading legislative changes regarding class size for K-2 classrooms.

A question was asked regarding teacher assistants and if there was any thought to reducing TA positions to come up with the extra teachers that would be needed. Dr. Cartner responded that reducing teacher assistants is not on the radar at this time and he does not foresee a likely scenario where that would happen. He reminded everyone that the Legislature made the class-size changes and it will depend on their action how the matter progresses.

Dr. Cartner asked for questions/concerns.

A question was asked about make-up time for days missed due to Hurricane Matthew and what happens if someone has a struggle to make up the hours.

Mr. Lassiter responded that correspondence was sent to school bookkeepers that outlined the process of making up time for 3 of the days missed. He indicated making up the time is at the discretion of the supervisor and individuals should talk with their immediate supervisor if they have questions.

Dr. Cartner shared that the point of allowing TAs the option of making up with time was so that no one would suffer a loss in pay. He indicated the district worked hard to make sure there was no financial loss to employees.

A question was asked about the merit pay bonus allocated in the State budget.

Mr. Lassiter responded and explained the process used by a Committee that consisted of representatives from all levels of employees eligible for the merit pay (teachers and instructional support positions were not eligible per state guidelines). He shared a copy of the rubric that will be used for eligible employees and explained the process being followed. He explained that the district was allotted approximately \$86,000 (this includes taxes and benefits) and there are over 300 eligible employees. Once the rubrics are completed those with the highest scores will be awarded the merit bonus.

Dr. Cartner shared that the merit bonus funds provided by the state were only for employees paid from state funds. He indicated that the district has chosen to include all employees regardless of funding source.

A question was asked about the attendance part of the rubric and would 12-month employees that took vacation during the summer lose points for attendance. A question was also asked about individuals that used compensatory time.

Mr. Lassiter responded that the attendance on student days would be what was used to determine points for attendance.

Dr. Cartner indicated the merit pay would be distributed via check and not direct deposit.

A question was asked about the early release day on Wednesday, November 23rd, and how it applies to staff. Dr. Cartner responded that no decision has been made at this point, but he would probably lean toward making sure principals have someone at school until all buses clear and allowing them to release others when students have cleared the building.

The Non-Certified Advisory Council adjourned at 1:32 p.m.

Following the adjournment of the NCAC meeting, Dr. Cartner asked Teacher Assistants to stay and meet with him and Mr. Lassiter. The majority of the schools were represented in this meeting.

Mr. Lassiter discussed the fact that on at least four occasions since he has been in ECPPS, he has heard Teacher Assistants say "we" do not feel important, valued, appreciated, etc. and that because they do not have degrees the district does not care about them. He asked for open and honest communication about why they feel that way.

Dr. Cartner shared that the purpose of the discussion was for them to talk and for he and Mr. Lassiter to listen.

The general consensus from individuals present was that they do feel they are valued/appreciated/important and they are happy/satisfied. It was shared that in many cases, the principal determines the level of value/appreciation/importance they feel.

There was a concern that they were not included in the poverty training scheduled for October 31st and Mr. Lassiter responded that teacher assistants were not scheduled to work on October 31st. The meeting was open to the community and they could have attended, but it would have been on their own time since they were not scheduled to work that day.

A concern was shared about staffing in EC classrooms and the need for additional assistants in some of the self-contained classes.

There was discussion about the history of hours/salary and “classified” vs. “salaried” employees. Mr. Lassiter reviewed the information he had regarding the history of TAs being changed to 30 hours per week -- budgetary issues called for reduction in staff or reduction in hours and the system chose to reduce hours to keep as many individual employed as possible. The 30 hours were established in order for employees to retain benefits.

A question was asked about when TAs will know about their status for 2016-17. Dr. Cartner responded that it will depend on action by the Legislature and when the system has a budget. He indicated efforts will be made to keep everyone informed throughout the process.

There was discussion about TAs no longer qualifying to have their paychecks spread over 12 months. Dr. Cartner explained that state law says if you do not work on the first day teachers return, you do not have the option to have your pay distributed for 12 months. He indicated that in moving forward, the district may need to look at having everyone report on the first day and he will look into the matter.

A question was asked if TAs can “volunteer” on workdays and Dr. Cartner responded that they cannot due to Fair Labor Standards Act rules.

The meeting adjourned at 2:03 p.m.