

Teacher Advisory Committee
10.10.17
3:30 p.m.

Present:

Cartner, Larry
Lassiter, Steve
Sanders, Joanne

Comstock, Ed
Davis, Linda
Fulford, Monica
Harrell, Jessica
Hughes, Sheila
Kimmel, Joseph

Lilley, Linda
Rountree, Eugene
Santana, Myraida
Wooten, Liz

Dr. Cartner welcomed everyone to the meeting. Time was provided for members to review responses to questions submitted prior to the meeting. Dr. Cartner indicated an image with information which would identify a specific school was redacted from the first question.

Mr. Lassiter provided additional information in response to a question that was submitted regarding teacher retention/teacher turnover. He shared that sign-on bonuses are provided for high need schools and hard to fill positions (some elementary, math 6-12, science 6-12 and Exceptional Children).

A question was asked about possible incentives for high performing teachers that would voluntarily switch to low performing schools, specifically would additional compensation be considered?

Mr. Lassiter responded that would be excellent conversation in discussions about teacher contracts (*1, 2 or 4-year contracts will be available in 2018-19*) and perhaps 4-year contracts could be offered to individuals that switch to low-performing schools. He also commented that ReStart schools will have flexibility to offer bonuses.

A comment was shared about a parent concern regarding the scheduling of open house events at the beginning of the school year.

Dr. Cartner responded that the district attempts to best meet the needs of parents in scheduling events and that none of the Open House activities overlapped with each other. The only overlap that occurred was between ninth grade cookouts and elementary Open House. Since both events were floating, parents would have been able to attend both.

Dr. Cartner discussed use of yellow buses for field trips within the district and the associated costs to the district. He indicated the State provides funding for transportation to/from students' homes and the district has to absorb the cost of local field trips (\$2.97 per mile) by using local funding. He asked for thoughts/comments on recouping these fees. There was group discussion that included: the costs for field trips, use of buses (activity vs. yellow); costs to students; use of buses by CTE programs; and driver pay. Dr. Cartner indicated he would

keep the TAC posted on any changes that might be forthcoming (*no changes would be made for first semester*).

A question was asked about elementary math pacing guides, Engage New York and mid-year assessments.

Dr. Sanders responded that assessments will vary by grade level and benchmarks are created based on teacher & coach feedback.

Mr. Lassiter asked for suggestions for teacher recruitment and retention.

There was group discussion which included: health/wellness campaign; counseling sessions with/for teachers; support system/safe haven; Mentor contact from Day 1; Fall/Spring Climate surveys; housing information/assistance for new teachers; hiring “veteran” teachers to provide PD for “new” teachers; and incentives to retain teachers. In response to the incentives suggestion to retain teachers, Mr. Lassiter reminded the group that the district currently offers extensive professional development opportunities for licensure renewal which is a benefit that saves teachers money. He also informed the group that the district will pay the license renewal fee for teachers.

There was discussion about recruitment challenges faced when vacancies occur at the last minute.

A question was asked about transitioning to change and how to get everyone on board. Examples were given of co-workers that are “waiting to retire/move” and what can be done to prevent complaints which can become toxic throughout a school.

Dr. Cartner responded that change is hard and it is difficult for folks to face the fact that what “we” have been doing for the last five years was not working. He shared that he, Mr. Lassiter and Dr. Sanders are working hard to engage staff; leverage leadership in buildings and address questions/concerns raised about the need for change. He encouraged members to volunteer and ask their principals how they can serve as leaders in their schools. There was group discussion about negative vs. positive reinforcement (not what you say, but how you say it) and the good things that are going on during Wednesday meetings with instructional coaches.

Teacher morale was discussed and Dr. Cartner indicated it is a function of the building principals to focus on positive morale. He shared information about a book he is reading on the training of Navy SEALs and the exercises they go through to build leadership and teamwork. The winning teams in the exercise work in sync and have leaders that encourage teamwork.

Dr. Cartner indicated that based on school feedback, he changed the early release days originally scheduled for November 8 & 9 to full school days. He shared that the majority of responses from schools were in favor of making the change – only one school did not want the change.

The meeting adjourned at 4:32 p.m.