

**Teacher Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes
11-21-2019**

Present:

**Bob Thomas-Superintendent
August Askins-Holston Middle
Elishia Basner-West Hills Elementary
Dave Brooks-Adrian Burnett Elementary
Amy Cox-Halls Elementary
Sherry Fischbach-West Valley Middle
Anthony Hancock-Bearden Middle
Doug James-Austin East High
Michelle Keaton-Paul Kelley Academy
Whitney Parson-Farragut High
Lynn Shuryan-Norwood Elementary
Laurie Smith-Cedar Bluff Elementary
Michelle Staal-Northwest Middle**

Not Present:

**Natalie Dowling-Carter High
Rachel Evans-South-Doyle Middle
Tiffany Holmes-Lonsdale Elementary
Lucius Irvin-South Doyle Middle
Stephanie Lewis-Gap Creek Elementary
Stacey Reece-West High**

Guests:

**Renee Kelly-Chief of Staff
Ron McPherson-Assist. Superintendent, Finance
Jon Rysewyk-Assist. Superintendent, Curriculum & Instr.
Shannon Jackson-Exec. Dir. Teaching & Learning
Carly Harrington-Communications Director
Steve Rudder-Specialist of Curriculum
Paula Sarver-Specialist of Curriculum
Janice Cook-Director of School Culture**

Welcome

- Superintendent Thomas welcomed members and guests
- Superintendent Thomas opened discussion of Bible Release Pilot
 - Superintendent Thomas explained the state law, and the pilot in Knox County and asked council members for opinions and discussion.
 - Member discussion /comments:
 - It is difficult for students to make-up instruction from technology class; there are definite concerns with student's ability to make up projects with a loss of instruction time
 - Instrumental Music – How would we meet performance and curriculum goals with students missing class time?
 - Is it best for students to have inconsistency?
 - “While I value the importance of religious instruction, there are several issues with cutting class time. How difficult will this be on the office staff to keep up with students being excused and returning from release program?”
 - How does this go along with district goals? If we cannot say that a program has a direct connection with goals, we should not support it.
 - If we allow a Bible Release, then will there be other Release Time requests?
 - Concerns with monitoring students coming back with treats

Presentations

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Presentations were given in response to questions from September meeting

- KCS Strategic Plan-Research, Evaluation and Assessment - Steve Rudder
 - Mr. Rudder presented the goals set forth in the Strategic Plan.
 - Increasing Student Achievement:
 - Proficiency in Math
 - Proficiency in Reading
 - Proficiency in Ready Graduation
 - Question: Is ACT Composite based on scores from first test attempt /taken through school, is it best score, or is it super score?
 - Answer: It is best score, which is part of reason results come in later.
 - Question: Will Pearson allow for parent /student tracking their own scores?
 - Answer: Unsure at this time.
 - Eliminating Disparities
 - Provide Student Supports
 - Narrow Achievement Gaps
 - Improve Student Access
 - Question: Is this what principals use for their individual school plan?
 - Answer: Yes. Principals receive a monthly report.
 - Question: Are ELL students accounted for?
 - Answer: Yes.
 - Creating a Positive Culture
 - Information is based on surveys
 - Question: What percent of staff actually participated in the survey?
 - Answer: About 40% participated, which is actually a pretty good response rate.
 - A classified staff survey has not been administered yet but is being worked on.
 - Question: What percent of parents participated in the survey?
 - Answer: About 30%. There is no way to know if people take the survey more than 1 time since surveys are anonymous.
 - Question: Are definitions of words such as “bullying” given, as not everyone uses the same criteria to decide what is and isn’t bullying?
 - Answer: No, but in future surveys, definitions will be included.
 - Question: Did Bearden students whose ACT scores were withheld affect the research results?
 - Answer: Unfortunately, there is no way to know for sure.
- RTI – (Response to Instruction and Intervention) History and Requirements – Shannon Jackson and Paula Sarver

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- Paula presented a handout and gave an overview of RTI.
 - Requirements to use RTI² implemented in stages over past several school years.
 - School year 14-15 All Elementary
 - School year 15-16 Middle
 - School year 16-18 High
 - School year 17-18 Dyslexic
 - Testing schedule
 - K-6th grade takes Benchmarks in Fall, Winter & Spring
 - 7th-8th graders take Benchmarks in Spring only
 - 9th-12th grades - Benchmarks not required but use of Early Warning Program which includes attendance among other factors.
 - Parent notification is required
 - If Tier 2 or 3 interventions necessary, parents are alerted.
 - Tier 2 is for students who are 6 months below grade level
 - Tier 3 is for students 1-2 years below grade level
 - Data progress is checked every 2 weeks.
 - Ongoing evaluation to make changes needed for each student not responding to intervention.
 - If student does not respond to intervention, they are referred for evaluation for learning disability.
 - Fidelity Monitoring required to gauge:
 - Is intervention appropriate?
 - Is intervention being properly implemented?
 - Direct Instruction/Observation used:
 - In classroom to see how student is responding.
 - To help teacher to know how specific students are responding to group instruction.
 - And team meets regularly to track progress and share feedback.
 - Spreadsheets are frequently updated to keep all teachers informed
 - Question: Has number of services for elementary students increased
 - Answer: Shannon Jackson- RTI can offer interventions for students who didn't otherwise qualify for SPED services, and interventions have kept more students from entering SPED services.
 - Question: Will there be additional training available?
 - Answers:
 - There will be training in January
 - Team can come to school to work with teachers and continue training to ensure all staff feel comfortable with the program
 - Question: How do we use the scores to see which areas students need more help?
 - Answer: Benchmark and progress monitoring show specific problem areas on test.

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- Council member brought up concerns with culture at specific school. Teacher agreed to share concerns with Superintendent and Chief of Staff via email so they may be heard and addressed appropriately.
- Behavior Concerns and Cultural Responsiveness Q&A – Janice Cook
 - Janice highlighted the responsibilities of her team.
 - Across the country, behavior and self-regulation problems are being seen
 - In implementing a response to these new issues, fundamentals are being addressed.
 - It is known that N.A.S. babies’ brains are different.
 - Seeking mobile support teams
 - Ways to develop those supports
 - In reality, it will take some time to develop and implement a plan.
 - Recognize that teachers need emotional as well as classroom support
 - Restorative Intervention practices work for some students, but not all.
 - Question: From a parent’s perspective, how are you protecting the rest of the students in the class from secondary trauma?
 - There are two strands: Regular education and Special education. Solutions need to be implemented individually.
 - Comment: Kids are seeing inappropriate behavior being rewarded; teachers see a lack of support when what is misbehavior is being rewarded.
 - Comment: Kids are seeing inappropriate behavior being rewarded; teachers see a lack of support when what is misbehavior is being rewarded.
 - Restorative Intervention and ISS are not supposed to be happening in the same place.
 - Comment: In some schools, they are happening in the same place, so students and teachers see inconsistency in the way misbehavior is addressed.
 - More training for teachers is necessary to carry them through the skills necessary to address different types of students and behavior.
 - Outside Support Services: At this time there are nearly 600 Middle and High School students receiving support services through Helen Ross McNabb Center, with a waiting list for more students in need of services.
 - There are currently 23 therapists for this number of students at a cost of \$800,000, which is funded with Safe Schools Grant and Title IV money.
 - There are 14 mental health professionals/case managers in KCS for Special Education and Emotionally Disturbed students.
 - Due to time constraints, Janice will return to continue Q&A for January meeting.

Superintendent Thomas-Wrap Up

- Items planned for January Agenda
 - Janice Cook will return for discussion of how to support teachers and students
 - Continuation of Grade Level discussion of Strategic Plan
- Superintendent Thomas wished the Council members a very Happy Holiday to relax and recharge.

❖ **Next Meeting-Thursday, January 23, 2020**