

**Meeting Minutes**  
**October 20, 2020**

**Members Present:**

Bob Thomas  
Renee Kelly  
Ashley Anthony  
Tanya Coats  
Jordan Culp  
Chris Douglass  
Derek Griffin  
Laurie Griffin  
Paula Hancock  
Melody Hawkins  
Kellie Layden  
Katherine Mencer  
Kayla Montgomery  
Florence Ndiaye  
Stephanie Peltier-Green  
Michael Rodgers  
Sofia Roth-(Virtual)  
Heather Sumpter-Blakemore  
Dee Thomason  
Linda Treadwell  
Victoria Tutor  
Antoinette Williams  
Tammi Campbell

**Members Not Present:**

Alejandra Berry  
Chris Douglass  
Sonya Kyle

**Guests:**

Theresa Nixon  
Jason Myers  
Lisa Wagoner  
Scott Bolton (Virtual)  
Jennifer Hemmelgarn

**1. Welcome – Superintendent Thomas**

- Superintendent opened the meeting with welcome and wellness check to gauge how teachers and administrators feel about the school year so far, and how they feel students are doing
- Brief discussion of concerns with virtual students
- Superintendent Thomas stated that it is clear that teachers continue to do a great job
- Recognized that virtual learning works best when internet and devices are dependable, students are intrinsically motivated and have strong support at home

**2. 2<sup>nd</sup> Semester Virtual Learning Plan – Jon Rysewyk and Theresa Nixon**

- \*See PowerPoint Presentation Attached
- Following the PowerPoint Presentation given by Theresa Nixon, a brief discussion of concerns with virtual learners ensued
- Virtual Instruction is here to stay
- Virtual options allow KCS to offer additional classes to all students
- REA will provide a year-long report

### 3. COVID-19 Updates: Protocols and Procedures – Jason Meyers and Lisa Wagoner

- KCS has maintained a positive relationship with Knox County Health Department before Covid-19
- Jason Myers explained the duration of Quarantine and Isolation
- It is about time, not test results, cannot test out of quarantine
- Goal is to always get contact list to the Health Department so families may be contacted before the following day of school
- Contact tracing is much more difficult in Middle and High Schools where students travel in and out of several classes during the day in addition to cafeteria
- Discussion:
  - If student is out for required duration of time, they are required to provide documentation to return
  - The school has letter from State Dept of Health
  - Paperwork for students who are ordered to quarantine is different from that of students who test positive
  - All rumored incidents are fully investigated
  - Due to overwhelming number of testing, recommendations are to be tested if experiencing symptoms
  - Encouraging as many students and staff members as possible to receive free flu vaccine
  - BOE passed a policy on consequences for students who repeatedly break mask rules. If there are issues at a particular school, reach out to your administrator
    - Policies: C-240, B-230, G-130
      - We are seeing issues with reporting virtual attendance

### 4. Evaluations SY2021: In-Person and Virtual – Scott Bolton

- \*See Power Point Presentation attached
- Evaluations are as normal
- Any changes would require state action
- Governor Lee announcement on October 16 encouraged the General Assembly to take action to remove student achievement scores from TEAM Evaluation Model
- Observations will be as in past
- Department of Education published new TEAM Evaluation calendar on October 15<sup>th</sup>
- Will be sending resources for in-person and virtual instruction along with email from Superintendent Thomas which has already been posted on TEAM Evaluation Resource Link

### 5. Activity: KCS and Me – Tammi Campbell

- Discussed how educators came to KCS, were they recruited, or did they find KCS?
- Activity – *KCS and Me-What has KCS done for us lately?*
- Why join the KCS family as a minority?
- Why remain with the KCS family as a minority?
- \*See Feedback attached

### 6. Human Resources Update and Minority Recruiting Plans – Scott Bolton

- \*See Power Point Presentation attached.
- Looking forward to reading feedback from the Activity
- Discussion points
  - Information at Exit Interviews states:
    - Community Issues
    - Lack of community, no other minority staff
    - Inability to meet people in the community – particularly singles

- Jennifer agreed to prepare a more detailed Exit Interview Report for a future MAC meeting
- MAC Member stated that there is evidence of KCS action steps
- 3.66% of KCS Certified Employees are African American
- 16% of student population is African American
- 1.5% of Certified Employees are Hispanic
- 10-11% of student population is Hispanic
- 13.4% of administrative staff is African American, which is close
- 16.67% administrative promotions were African American which says we are moving in the right direction. While we celebrate, we also recognize there is still more work to be done
- Rodney Russell works with Aspiring Leaders pathway for teachers wanting to move advance to administrative positions. Covid-19 has slowed many classes and programs. Many who were to participate have been placed in Administrative Assistant positions
- Recognize the desire to advance into other positions as well, such as coaches, counselors, etc. Including department head in the conversation would help with recruitment and retention. Diversity through all stratus is the goal
- Minority principals' meetings have brought robust, candid conversations where there is an opportunity to speak freely and create strategies to address
- Many principals by nature are great at coaching people up. Some teachers of color report they receive a lot of support in reaching goals from their administrators. We continue to emphasize this in Principal meetings
- The idea of using retired minority administrators as mentors was discussed
- This could be beneficial not only to minorities, but to others as well
- Experiences would help with administrators knowing how to recruit
- Important to understand that not all retired minority administrators felt happy and supported. Some may have stayed with KCS longer if they felt more supported. We would need to be willing to hear their feedback as constructive and useful
- There are currently mentoring programs for novice teachers, but there is a need for minority mentoring beyond the school level
- We would like to look at minority mentorship district wide
- A member suggested that educators job descriptions need to be rewritten for the skills currently used. There are a lot more skillsets and training needed for today's educators than in the past

#### **7. Hot Topics – Grade Band Discussions – Renee Kelly and MAC**

- Renee Kelly thanked the council for robust conversation, recognizing the original schedule of 1 hour does not allow enough time for all that the members bring to the conversation. The group agreed to change the meeting time from 4:30-5:30 pm to 4:30-6:00 pm
- Members participated in Grade Band discussion of Hot Topics, which will help with agenda planning for future meetings

#### **8. Closing Comments – Superintendent Thomas**

- Thanked the presenters and members

# KCS Minority Advisory Council

KNOX COUNTY SCHOOLS

## What Has KCS Done for Us Lately?

Why Work for KCS	Why Remain with KCS?
Connection to UT	PD for minority support (could do monthly support group)
People stay because they went to school here	Opportunities for growth (show direct path for leadership)
Go to college programs and pull minority students into teaching	Summer Break
Pay (lower than surrounding counties) →	Minority meet & Greet *
Minority Meet and Greets -Precious	Pay\$ Pay\$ Pay\$
Pay through the summer	Opportunities to grow Admin other positions
Professional Dev	PD for minority support (could do monthly support group)
Opportunities to grow	Tammi/Renee-See upper level positions
Connection to UTK or other TN colleges	Stable (not losing job)
PD connections for minority supports and show how we support minority teachers	Demonstrate advancement opportunities for minority teachers
More positive internship experience	Salary and benefits (competitive with other Lea's in TN)
Community Employer-Largest LEA in E.TN	Opportunities to teach "Advance level" courses (We are always looking into Intervention courses with struggling learners).
More diverse in comparison to surrounding counties	Fair evaluations-Percentage of minority teachers receiving overall summative scores of 4 or higher
Strong work ethic and dedication to profession	Any minority teacher KCS "teacher of the year"? As measure of teacher excellence
Invest in "self" professional development through graduate courses leading to advance degrees	Board Make up (More Minority)
***Ole school leaders that "look like me"	Admin Make up more
***Teach students that "look like me"	Finally showing concern for the value of minority students & personal
Consistent pay	Mentors
In the past Admins & Department Directors helped other Minorities	Offer incentives
Mentors	Become agents/advocates for minority students to grow their own programs (i.e. They can be teachers, too)

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Develop a relationship w/college/TSU/East TN State UT	Teachers are celebrated and not made to feel as though the matter and are not always doing something wrong
Offer incentives	Novice teachers & teachers novice to the district benefit from a Mentor. Having a minority mentor in addition to the one at your base school.
Being Intentional	Rewrite the teachers job description to include the current 20th century teaching requirements therefore increasing salary
Opportunities from growth/advancement	opportunities for leadership and advancement in various capacity (instructional coaches, department heads, Facilitators, etc.)
Diversity (in comparison to surrounding counties)	Current:
Competitive Pay (possible sign on bonus)	*Innovative →willing to try new research - based things/programs/approaches
Desirable culture - no intimation -teachers fee they have a "voice"	Future Opps:
Supportive School Board and Superintendent	*More pathways for recruiting! (current TAs, Teaching as Profession)
Change/progress is evident!	*Support with endorsements, licensing costs, etc.
PECCA Team / MOU-valuable collaboration	Cost of living is affordable / ideal
KCEA opinions and concerns addressed with actionable results/outcomes	Family/ vested/tenure
You have an opportunity to work in a "safe bubble"	Ties to the university /alum
For the third largest school district in the state we have the lowest cost of living.	Great location to raise family
Opportunities For leadership within school (personally)	central location (greater Knox)
→ However, at district level it is a little more difficult	Lack of other opportunities (in Education)
Large diverse system	Professional Growth / Development opportunities
creation of MAC	Student encouragement (to stay in education)
Salary / benefits based on where we live	
Teacher→our kids can tach with us or to our request school in the county	

# **KCS** Minority Advisory Council

KNOX COUNTY SCHOOLS

PD opportunity	
Sign on bonus	
Second career	
Largest district opportunities	
Convenience (College to KCS Pipeline)	
Diverse population / opportunities	
Place to inspire youth	

### **KCS MAC Meeting FOCUS Topic**

- What can we as MAC Members do to help (Actions)
- Ideas to help promote community in schools
- Mentoring
- Continue conversation surrounding minority recruitment w/HR
- Pathways to growth
- Virtual learning continuing beyond 20-21 school year
- Update / rewriting the educators job description
- Minority Mentorship Program
- Continue the conversation w/HR
- Conversations w/School lev. Admin (Prin. Advisory Council)-Q&A (also seasoned admin-current & former)
- Mentoring Teacher Leaders w/in building
- How can we make the profession "great again" 😊
- You tell us why we should stay or recruit-Revamp application process, transfer process, etc. Lots of opportunities & benefits for new people but what about the "old faithfuls."
- Starting Black Student Unions for schools empowering our black & brown students
- College & Career Fair For students & utilize African American Staff that serve in different roles w/in Knox comm inspire our kiddos (ea.'s. school psychologist, teacher/science, teacher/Ele. Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Social Studies Principals)
- Supporting school - level administration with elevating the voice of minority educators in our building
- Continue minority recruitment efforts
- Provide link or list of updated teacher recruitment programs (I am totally unaware of these programs)
- Please keep us updated on EVALS. \*Sometimes info produced through media is unclear
- How do we move up in KCS other than principalship programs (i.e. coaches, supervisors, etc.)?
- Special Ed & Minority
- Publicize Minority Goals
- Exit Interview Data
- Data on Minority Recruitment over the last 3-4 years
- Minority Meet & Greet/Mentorship
- Cont. Minority Recruitment
- Leadership roles - Being the "only one" in school building
- Generational digital divide

- Is Knox County planning to do any form of culture in any building
- Teacher support (mentor program)
- Recruitment of students to programs (magnet programs- CTE etc. Do students know they can transfer, what's offered, how, etc.?) →stats on enrollment in these programs
- Leadership pathways