

**Teacher Advisory Committee Meeting  
West High School Library  
Tuesday, November 28, 2017**

**Present:**

Bob Thomas, Superintendent  
August Askins, Holston Middle  
Tiffany Holmes, Lonsdale  
Sanders, Christenberry  
Michelle Keaton, Paul Kelley Academy  
Katheryne Cohen, West Haven  
Antoinette Williams, Farragut Intermediate  
Merry Anderson, Karns Middle  
Jim Porter, Powell High  
Amy Cox, Halls Elementary  
Ali Umbarger, Sunnyview  
Natalie Dowling, Carter High  
Jarrod Pendergraft, South-Doyle Middle  
Kelly Farr, Mount Olive

**Guests:**

Dr. Kelly Drummond, KCS Human Resources  
Dr. Brook Dennard Rosser, KCS Human Resources  
Melissa Massie, KCS Student Support Services Nicole  
Jeffrey Wright, KCS Student Support Services  
Patti Bounds, KCS Board Chair  
Terry Hill, KCS Board Member  
Karen Peterman, KCEA

**Not Present:**

Laura Davis, West High  
Chris Beatty, System wide  
Kitty Pruett, Northwest Middle  
Tanya Coats, KCEA President  
Megan Christian, Bearden High  
Rebecca Loveday, Farragut Middle

**Superintendent Bob Thomas**

- Superintendent Thomas welcomed everyone and thanked them for being at the meeting.
- He recognized KCS Board Chair Patti Bounds and KCS Board Member Terry Hill.
- Mr. Thomas introduced Ms. Melissa Massie, Executive Director of Student Support Services to talk about PBIS and Restorative Practices.

**PBIS and Restorative Practices**

- Ms. Massie gave an overview of PBIS and Restorative Practices to the group.
- She stated that the state and her team have spent a lot of time looking at what are the best practices for kids in terms of discipline.
- Ms. Massie stated that it is very important to invest in children on the front end instead of waiting until the child is in middle or high school.
- Ms. Massie talked about the Disparities in Educational Outcomes task force (DEO) – a group of business, school, community and faith-based stakeholders to recommend strategies to address disproportions in academic achievement and discipline outcomes in Knox County Schools that might be correlated with income, race, language and/or disability.
- Ms. Massie introduced Mr. Jeffrey Wright, Student Support Specialist for Knox County Schools to talk more in detail about PBIS and Restorative Practices.
- Mr. Wright asked "What is PBIS?" - PBIS is the framework that teaches students behavior.
- PBIS acknowledges behavior both good and bad and also has positive and negative consequences.
- There are three (3) tiers with PBIS and Mr. Wright discussed the different tiers with the group.
- Mr. Wright talked about restorative practices and the philosophy of discipline.
- Restorative Practice is about building positive relationships with students and teaching those students values and empathy.

- Mr. Wright stated that we try to encourage our staff to teach their students empathy – how does my behavior effect other students.
- Mr. Wright stated that restorative practices allows us to try other interventions instead of suspension.
- He stated that they offer two-day trainings for schools interested. These trainings allow teachers to have more options for how to handle bad behavior.
- Ms. Massie stated that she knows its hard work, but she has seen some good things happening in Knox County Schools.
- Committee member asked where the success was. Ms. Massie said that success comes when administrators buy in and then teachers buy in.
- Committee member stated that teachers feel like they have no control and are defeated. Teachers feel like they are handing out coins for behavior students should already be doing.
- Mr. Wright stated that following through and having consequences goes a long way. Consistency is key when trying to eliminate bad behaviors.
- Committee member asked if there could be more training provided throughout the year and summer.
- Committee member recommended that teachers see case studies where restorative practices are working within our district or other districts.
- Committee member suggested that a newsletter be sent to schools to highlight the positive things that restorative practices are doing for other schools within our district.
- Committee member recommended a canvas webpage for resources on restorative practices.
- Committee member stated that Holston Middle has a lot of bus incidents and suggested the bus drivers go through the restorative practice training. Ms. Melissa Massie stated that it would be too much for them to drive the bus and participate in restorative practices.
- Committee member asked when do you start weening students off of this practice and expect them to behave as adults.
- Committee member asked if there is a system in place to monitor what other schools are doing with restorative practice.
- Committee member asked how restorative practices look at the high school level.
- Committee member stated that they are receiving a lot of pushback on restorative practices in her community.
- Ms. Massie and Mr. Wright wrapped up the conversation with offering to support schools and staff as they move forward with restorative practice. They suggested following Bill Baldwin and Andrew Brown on twitter, because they share PBIS and restorative practice ideas almost daily.
- Ms. Massie and Mr. Jeffrey both offered the entire group their cell phone numbers.

### **Teacher Recruitment and Retention Discussion**

- Dr. Kelly Drummond (Director of Human Resources) asked the group how many substitutes they thought KCS needed today.
- Dr. Drummond answered with 470 substitutes were needed.
- Dr. Drummond reported that 300 certified positions were filled in July 2017. She expressed that there is a true need for certified employees.
- Dr. Brook Rosser (Talent and Acquisition and Retention) introduced herself and talked about her position with KCS.
- Dr. Rosser stated that there is a huge teacher shortage across the United States.
- She talked about surrounding universities and stated that Tennessee Tech produces the most teachers in this area. She also stated that 93% of the men and women graduating from surrounding universities are Caucasian.
- Dr. Rosser announced to the group that the HR department has been working on several projects to help recruit the best teachers.
- In May 2017, an online Exit Interview Questionnaire was developed for distribution to employees that have resigned from the district. Data gathered from the questionnaire is currently being used

to inform our efforts around retention and to provide insight into areas and gaps in the employee experience with KCS.

- HR submitted and were awarded a grant from the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE). The TDOE's Diversity Innovation Grants are designed to spur district level innovative practices around recruiting a pipeline of diverse, high-quality teachers, that better reflect the increasingly diverse student population of Tennessee's public schools.
- Dr. Rosser stated that she has been very strategic and intentional in her efforts to reach out to and establish a rapport with a variety of organizations and civic leaders in our local and regional communities.
- Dr. Rosser and HR have produced a recruitment video, along with a new dedicated recruitment website.
- Dr. Rosser also talked about the rebranding of the Human Resources Department's collateral and social media platforms to cultivate a portfolio of cohesive items that can be used explicitly to market and rebrand our district as a contemporary, progressive and innovative place to work.
- Committee member asked why other districts were getting our teachers. Dr. Rosser stated that other districts offer more money and less work.
- Committee member stated that teachers have very hard jobs and need a lot of support.
- Committee member stated that she is the only teacher of color at her school. She shared some negative experiences with the group and expressed how important it is to have diversity in a school and also have support.
- Committee member asked the group how many teachers encourage our students to be teachers.
- The committee stated that teachers should be highlighting the teaching profession and encourage students to want to be a teachers.
- Committee member stated that being chosen to be a mentor should be an honor. The teacher chosen to be a mentor should love what they do.
- Committee member asked if teaching as a profession is still viable.
- Committee member asked about incentives for being a mentor.
- Dr. Drummond praised Superintendent Thomas for carefully placing new principals in schools where he felt like they would be successful.
- Committee member asked if during the exit interview, if we are asking employees why they liked their administrators.

#### **Next Meeting**

- Next Meeting will be Thursday, January 25 at 4:30 pm in the West High School Library