

**Teacher Advisory Committee
West High School Library Classroom
Tuesday, April 12, 2016**

Attendees

Dr. Jim McIntyre, Superintendent
Eric Agular, Chilhowee Intermediate School
Merry Anderson, Karns Middle School
Chris Beatty, Powell High School
Jannice Clark, Kelley Volunteer Academy
Laura Davis, West High School
Rebekah Ellis, L&N STEM Academy
Kelly Farr, Mount Olive Elementary
Jessica Helman, Vine Middle Magnet School
Beth Howard, AP, Hardin Valley Academy
Heidi Knapczyk-Walsh, Christenberry Elementary
Wanda Lacy, Farragut High School
Ryan Milani, Career Magnet Academy
Jarrod Pendergraft, Halls Middle School
Dr. Kitty Pruet, Northwest Middle School
Jessica White, Cedar Bluff Middle School
Lee Anna Wright, Northwest Middle/Ridgedale
Jennifer Sullivan, Administrative Assistant

Not in Attendance

Dr. Rodney Russell, Director of Human Capital
Lauren Hopson, KCEA President
Annette Benson, Corryton Elementary
Tanya Coats, Farragut Intermediate School
Jessica Holman, Principal, Inskip Elementary
Laurie Price, Bearden High School

Guests

Missy Massie, Executive Director of Student Support Services
Gary Spencer, Interim Executive Director of Finance
Buzz Thomas, Interim Superintendent
Terry Hill, Board of Education Member

Greeting & Introductions

- Everybody introduced themselves, including guests.
- The April 19th meeting will be cancelled
- Flexibility of members is appreciated with regard to rescheduling the March meeting

- Tonight's meeting is in conflict with Collaborative Conferencing and Kindergarten Round-up so a few members and guests were not able to attend
- Ryan Milani has volunteered to take Lauren Hopson's place in reporting this meeting to the Board of Education at the May 2nd worksession

Special Education

- Currently serving between 8000-8500 students
- The exact number is dynamic due to students testing out of services and others moving into the area
- 350 Teachers assistants in the special education department
- Consider Special Education as a continuum of service----it's not a "place" but rather a service
- Each student is to be viewed as a general education student who receives services---all with unique needs
 - Consult students---(IEP students) typically on progress monitoring
 - Direct Services----students with a TA or in a pull out situation
 - Day school---most intensive needs---low student/teacher ratio
 - Co-teaching
- KCS operates under the premise of providing the "least restrictive environment"
- Zero students in residential situation
- Some feel that support is lacking for secondary social studies and science general ed teachers....much attention given to LA and math
- Learning is moving back to content-based teaching from skills-based teaching
- KCS realizes that more training could be beneficial, an attempt will be made to bring in the "universal design" folks to train a few at each school so they can then share with the remaining staff
- Trying to change the paradigm of the general ed teacher's role in the IEP meeting to reflect that their insight is actually most important to provide correct support services
- One member's particular experience: felt that the support team did not come at effective times throughout the day to help (ie during lunch, ENCORE, etc.) & not giving effective ideas for support (need more unique ideas for individual cases) (The Director will follow up with this situation)
- We are likely to be seeing a big influx of kids with severe and intensive needs based on recent observations
- Federal law states that we must try to follow a continuum of support which includes documentation from all involved
- Some have offered the solution to trying to single-handedly manage each special ed case in a teacher's class as identifying teachers in the school that have the "gift" or are particularly good at handling students

- with behavioral challenges and enabling them to have the support to provide services to the students in need
- Another solution for teachers feeling overwhelmed is to work together to identify students of need in advance so that relationships can be forged
 - Teachers must support each other and act as a support team
 - All teachers should be empowered to give input on students---what works and what doesn't
 - If support professionals have ideas for the classroom teacher, they need to make time to model and/or train the teacher to deliver the strategies effectively
 - Document=If there is a behavior plan, then there is a particular form/structure to use
 - Some teachers would like the opportunity to give more input on the professional's documentation & observations
 - One member shared some statistics (as of March 2016): 790 Autistic students in the KCS, 6 Case managers/support teachers & 4 Teaching assistants
 - Special Ed teacher burn out is a significant potential challenge
 - It is very difficult, but critically important to differentiate to such a degree that meets the learning needs of all students in the classroom
 - Some schools are perceived to be more "Special Education friendly," meaning that some schools appear to have teachers and administrators that are more comfortable with effectively meeting the needs of students with disabilities than others
 - There seems to be need for more training for teachers and administrators
 - Potential burn out may happen if there is not enough trained staff to cover the Special Ed needs so that the teacher can have a plan period or full lunch period
 - KCS Special Education Department has been great at providing training for the Special Ed teachers as well as licensure extending opportunities
 - There needs to be a more competitive pay scale so as not to lose the great teachers that we have, particularly excellent special education teachers, who are in high demand.
 - A concern expressed that special education teachers are feeling "over-meeting-ed", with not not enough pure planning time
 - A thought that smaller caseloads could be helpful
 - A solution of offering Special Ed teachers a scheduled workday on a infrequent but regular schedule which allows the teacher to be in school working on IEP and other paperwork without having to also teach in their classroom
 - The question was raised, "should we pay Special Ed teachers more", most feel that in addition to money (or perhaps even more importantly), they would appreciate time

- The common feeling is that our Special Ed teachers do a tremendous job with the resources that they are given
- Creating more positions is not necessarily the solution, positions are going unfilled as it is---there is a nationwide special education teacher shortage
- The number of students requiring services is not necessarily increasing significantly but the needs that they have are typically more intense
- Some teachers within KCS might transition to Special Ed if they were more aware of the process---watch for announcements coming from HR
- We need to dispel the myth that “once you get into Special Ed, they never let you out” so that KCS regular education teachers might be willing to teach in special education for a few years and transition back to the regular education setting
- Another solution to potential burn out might entail Special Ed teachers teaching general ed for a year or two and then going back to Special Ed.

Introduction of the Interim Superintendent

- Buzz Thomas was introduced to the committee
- His contract as Interim Superintendent will be effective July 9, 2016
- Members gave testimonials regarding the structure of TAC, and the powerful ways that it has given greater voice to teachers in addressing issues and solving problems for teachers
- Talked about the value of this group to the Teachers as well as to the Superintendent
- Mr. Thomas expressed interest in continuing TAC during his administration

Funding/BEP/BLTCs/Staffing Allocations/Textbooks/TAP

- Budget picture looking better this year (keeping our fingers crossed)
- Governor has proposed significant money toward BEP
- Sales tax revenue is up this year
- \$453.5 Million in proposed budget for FY17
- \$15 Million increase over FY16 budget
- Proposed 3% salary increase for certified employees, including teachers
- Proposed 2.5% salary increase for classified employees
- Offering workman’s’ compensation for certified employees for the first time
- 6% increase in health insurance premium in January but we’ll be able to keep proportional shares for employee / employer for all plans
- Proposed \$1 Million to be directed to transportation--- help contractors meet rigorous standards in service and safety; will significantly enhance training
- Placeholder for Disparity in Educational Outcomes Task Force recommendations, when they are finalized (i.e. cultural competency training)

- Instructional technology---working toward 1:1 technology in high schools beginning with providing teachers with Chromebooks
- Approximately \$50,000 to go toward PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention & Supports)
- One questioned how were staffing allocation decisions made?
 - Enrollment
 - Number of students living in poverty
 - Allocation given to school---principal has autonomy to decide how allocations will be used
- Poverty is tracked by different forms of public assistance and the family income survey (used to be Free/Reduced Lunch applications, but less reliance on that since the Community Eligibility Provision is in 42 schools)
- Tech needs---more than doubled the technology in some schools---need more building level tech support--- tech people (BLTCs) have heavy load --needs to be addressed
- Tech support used to fix devices needs to be boosted district-wide
- Interest in allowing teachers to address their own small issues like software updates (especially travelling teachers and support services)
- Possibility that some funding can be identified in the budget for BLTC support when 1st State estimate comes to us in mid-April
- Question: Looks like Non-traditional schools are not part of the Pilot / Haslam gift. Any way these schools can be part of the donation? A: The structure of this very generous gift was to address athletic fields at the traditional high schools and provide significant support (\$100,000) for academic support at those schools. KCS is grateful for this amazing gift
- Textbook concern--- at the secondary level one member noted that there were not enough books for each student to take home at her school, because classroom sets are being utilized – needs to be explored further
- Strategic compensation---more conversation needed, in general the working group decided that the base compensation needed to be fixed first and then the strategic compensation plan can be revisited.

ELL

Time concluded before getting to this topic. Perhaps this should carry over to the new TAC in the fall.

Closing remarks

- Dr. McIntyre expressed his gratitude to TAC for their discussions, insight and leadership
- Their input has been of great value to him for the past three years

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 10, 2016, no agenda is available.