

**Teacher Advisory Committee Meeting
West High School Library Classroom
Tuesday, May 6, 2014**

Attendees:

Dr. Jim McIntyre, Superintendent
Dr. Elizabeth Alves, Chief Academic Officer
Teresa Clark, Special Education Supervisor
Tanya Coats, KCEA President
Eric Aguilar, Chilhowee Intermediate School
Jekia Allen, A.L. Lotts Elementary School
Abigail Buczynski, Cedar Bluff Middle School
Kelly Clemmer, Gap Creek Elementary School
Mark Duff, Halls High School
Jessica Holman, Inskip Elementary School
Wandy Lacy, Farragut High School
Tenisha Marchbanks, Bearden Middle School
Jessica McDonald, Vine Middle School
Valita Norris, Central High School
Suzanne Sherman, Hardin Valley Academy
Heidi Walsh, Christenberry Elementary School
Vanita Williamson, Karns Middle School

Topics of Discussion

- Professional Development (PD)
- Instructional Coaching
- Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)
- Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI²)
- Process of selecting next year's committee

Professional Development

- Differentiation is an area where growth is needed; beginning teachers need different PD than experienced teachers
- Some feel that PD should be more teacher-led; KCS has great teachers that are willing to lead
- Smaller groups may be helpful
- Can easily become "information overload"
- Desire for PD to align to classroom, grade level, content area; utilize vertical teaming
- Could offer more session choices; too much repetition
- Should cover every day practical strategies
- KCS could utilize technology for "webinar" type PD to save travel time
- Best inservice is observing real-time teaching

Professional Learning Communities

- Each school could have a "sister" school for extended PLC groups
- Smaller PLC groups may be more helpful
- Could be beneficial to find out what other schools are doing that works

- Some feel PLCs should be based on curriculum areas
- Some coaches took over and weren't received well because of unfamiliarity
- When done well, PLCs are great; when done poorly, can be very painful
- Desire for PLCs to be about relationship building
- Knowledge that focus has to be about data, but shouldn't be totally data-driven
- Some find it difficult to take time to collaborate when so much other work to do; can cause resentment to creep in
- Perhaps KCS could set a minimum number of required hours and then make sessions optional
- SMART goals are good, but quizzes/tests can be too time-consuming
- May need to clarify whether teachers must attend both school-level PLC and departmental PLC
- SMART goals should be about what students need to know based on a unit of instruction; should be able to use authentic work from classroom to assess, not necessarily create a test/quiz

Instructional Coaches

- Coaches, principals, central office should all be same page; some teachers feel they are getting conflicting instructions
- Coaches must to know their teachers, student population
- Time split between schools can cause challenges
- Some teachers want coaches to be more hands-on, more help in classroom
- Big part of coach's role involves people skills
- Meant to be a support to teachers, not another supervisory level
- Some coaches are spread too thin to be effective
- Some fear that best teachers are being taken from classroom to become coaches
- Should focus on coaching – not errand running, not being a principal liaison or administration in-between
- Role very different at low-performing vs. high-performing schools
- Coaches are meant to serve as a personal trainer to help teachers improve skills
- Should be relevant, ongoing support; about getting right person
- Can make a difference if coach has taught at the school they serve
- Some teachers fear coaches, don't want their struggles shared with principal
- Some coaches insecure about job stability, fear may damage effectiveness

Response to Instruction and Intervention

- Tiered system meant to offer differentiated instruction to students that need extra help
- Implementation at elementary school level in 2014-2015; KCS has 1-year waiver on implementation at middle school and high school levels
- State regulations are stringent regarding requirements and menu of interventions
- Requires screening of students 3 times per year
- Some teachers feel that current amount of time students spend in intervention is too much; time is an issue and identification tool must be better
- Some teachers feel they should have more say in what intervention students attend
- State may require teacher intervention as opposed to teaching assistants, etc.
- Some fear that students identified as needing extra help get little or no related-arts time
- Some teachers feel there is simply not enough time in daily elementary schedule to also do intervention

Wrap-up

- Group should share ideas about how to select next year's committee by emailing suggestions to Dr. McIntyre
- Appreciation was expressed for important work of group; has made teachers feel they have a voice