

**Teacher Working Group Meeting
West High School Library Classroom
Thursday, March 13, 2014**

Attendees:

Dr. Jim McIntyre, Superintendent
Rodney Russell, Director of Human Capital Strategy
Eric Aguilar, Chilhowee Intermediate School
Jekia Allen, A.L. Lotts Elementary School
Glenn Arnold, L & N STEM Academy
Abigail Buczynski, Cedar Bluff Middle School
Kelly Clemmer, Gap Creek Elementary School
Tanya Coats, KCEA President
Mark Duff, Halls High School
Jessica Holman, Inskip Elementary School
Lauren Hopson, Halls Elementary School
Wandy Lacy, Farragut High School
Tenisha Marchbanks, Bearden Middle School
Suzanne Sherman, Hardin Valley Academy
Lindsey Stinnett, West High School
Vanita Williamson, Karns Middle School

Review of Professionalism Rubric

- Change to rubric for 2013-14 school year – previously 10 indicators, now only 4; indicators are narrowed and focused
- Principals want teachers to attend after-school activities because it builds relationships with students and community
- Some teachers feel it is unfair that some principals give points for things that others do not; want it to be consistent and specific
- Some teachers believe new teachers do not have opportunity to earn a “5”
- Some librarians have no one to mentor; have too many students to analyze data on every one
- Librarians join related arts PLC at some schools, gives them opportunity to mentor and or lead
- Some teachers feel rubric should include district/state activities not just school level activities
- Some feel principals may not be aware of everything educators are doing that could earn points
- Some principals accept written evidence of teachers’ leadership roles
- Most teachers want to do what is best for students even if it doesn’t fit or earn points on the rubric
- Some feel high school level allows for many more opportunities of school and community involvement than at the elementary school level; rubric should be different for elementary/secondary level
- Some teachers feel IEP meeting participation should count for points
- KCS cannot change the Professionalism Rubric, but principals can interpret/implement differently; KCS can make suggestions to State and guide administrators as to interpretation
- Would be good if Melissa Massie, Director of Student Services should interpret rubric for special education teachers and provide guidance to principals
- May also help if principals share lists with one another

- Anything that helps students should be considered for points
- Causes issues because State does not give specific lists
- All administrators should look for evidence of growth across the school year
- TAP Professionalism Rubric is different; group may want to look to that rubric for suggestions/guidance
- Goal is not to take autonomy away from principals as to interpretation of rubric
- This advisory group will solicit input and provide lists for specific things that would count at elementary school/middle school/high school levels

Professionalism/Autonomy

- Pacing guides may be a constraint for some teachers
- Some teachers feel that tests are the be all/end all – should be balance between test and covering curriculum
- Every class is different; teaching styles are different – should be taken into consideration
- Some teachers feel structure of textbooks is too rigid
- Timeline used to allow several days to cover topics; now only one day – teachers feel staying so close to a specific timeline doesn't give them time to do activities that reinforce lessons
- Pacing guides, coaches mandating things by certain time, expectations of observers that class be at a specific place cause teachers to feel they do not have choice to waiver from specific timeline
- Teachers want autonomy to teach at students' speed, not pacing guide's
- Covering everything doesn't necessarily mean students have learned material
- KCS needs to communicate pacing guides are truly just "guides;" let teachers know it will be okay to be off timeline
- Some coaches make mandates without knowing anything about student population/dynamics of particular class
- Some coaches just offer guidance/ideas, some only give mandates; teachers want coaches to be mentors
- Coaches who are spread too thin between several schools makes things seem disjointed; coaches who stay in building seem to work well
- Some teachers feel they don't have autonomy to decide what is best for their own students; makes them feel disrespected
- Some teachers being told to follow everything exactly; teachers do not want everything scripted
- Some teachers using blended learning style; some feel it doesn't fit TEAM rubric and therefore results in low evaluation scores
- Some believe it stifles success when evaluation becomes the goal; some teachers obsessed with scores
- Some teachers receive no encouragement for innovation or anything else
- Evaluators should remember to gather information before and after observation
- Teachers feel they should always be allowed to submit reflection; this message may not be getting through to evaluators
- A few teachers believe evaluators do not want them to do well
- Should be ongoing professional development about the rubric; rubric is about great teaching
- Some teachers prefer observations done by lead teachers; feel lead teachers know students better

- Some teachers feel lead teachers are more sympathetic and spend more time gathering information than administrators
- Some teachers are being required to submit day-to-day lesson plans; interpreted just like pacing guides
- Some teachers want to write their own assessments
- KCS needs to communicate that creativity and healthy variations are good; want teachers to stick to standards, but encourage innovation and individuality
- Teachers know KCS has right to tell them what to teach, but don't want to be told how to teach it
- Should be flexibility as to what good instruction looks like and encouragement for good teaching practices
- Some teachers believe there is a limit to what children can absorb each day; want to be heard when communicating what is best for their particular students
- Some teachers feel there is too much subjectivity by evaluators

Wrap-up

- Tennessee legislators considering delay of Common Core Standards for two years; teachers who feel strongly that it would be a step back should communicate with their state legislators
- Uncertain if delay of Common Core Standards would also delay PARCC assessments
- It appears that most teachers want high standards and an assessment that reflects those standards