

MINUTES OF CITIZENS' ADVISORY COUNCIL
PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY SCHOOLS
January 29, 2013

A meeting of the Citizens' Advisory Council was held on Tuesday, January 29, 2013, at 1:00 p.m. at the School Administration Office, Chatham, Virginia. There were Eleven (11) representatives present.

Also present were Mr. James E. McDaniel, Division Superintendent, Mrs. L. Ann Cassada, Assistant Superintendent for Support Services, Dr. Jeff Early, Assistant Superintendent for Operations, Dr. Lillian D. Holland, Assistant Superintendent for Administration, and Mrs. Wanda Vaughan, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction.

The Superintendent called the meeting to order and welcomed those in attendance. Introductions followed.

The following Council topics were discussed:

1. A question was raised about the requirements for Tier I and Tier II volunteers. A committee has been developed to review the criteria that were established over five (5) years ago. There is a desire to develop more continuity throughout the division. There are different criteria for visitor and volunteers in the schools. The major issue of discussion is whether visitors need to have the same clearance as that expected of a volunteer in the schools. Any changes in protocol for volunteers would become effective July 1, 2013.

2. A question was raised about new districts for athletics and having to travel to schools that are farther away for competitions.
The Virginia High School League (VHSL) will be reclassifying sports teams for football and basketball into six (6) classifications instead of groups. The games would be played with schools of the same size for championship games. The Dogwood District will be affected slightly by these changes with Nelson County being replaced by another school (possibly Prince Edward). The Piedmont District would include Bassett, Halifax, Magna Vista, Martinsville, Patrick County, Tunstall and George Washington High Schools. Pittsylvania County Schools have tried to begin games at an earlier time (JV basketball at 5:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. for varsity) on school nights.

Mrs. Ann Cassada, Assistant Superintendent for Support Services, addressed the following items:

1. Information relative to the annual December Special Education Child Count report was provided. Each year school divisions are required to provide the number of students served in the special education department. There was a slight decline in this number from last year. There is a Special Education Advisory Council whose goal is to provide appropriate resources to teachers. They are in

process of developing an assessment survey to determine the needs of the teachers and to provide resources for post-secondary education for students with disabilities.

2. A copy of the Bus Accident/Injury Administrator Checklist was provided. This checklist is used to ensure the safe transportation of students.

Dr. Lillian D. Holland, Assistant Superintendent for Administration, addressed the following items:

1. The proposed budget for 2013-2014 has been reviewed by the School Board Budget Committee. Over 12.1 million dollars have been cut from the school budget over the last four (4) years. The School Board and the Budget Committee has four (4) goals for the budget: save jobs, maintain quality instructional programs, ensure the long-term viability of the organization and provide a 2% salary increase consistent with the Governor's proposal for 2013-2014. The Governor's proposed budget includes \$1,292,272 more than received for 2012-2013. However, the majority of these funds are categorical for a 2% raise for Standards of Quality (SOQ) funded positions and the Virginia Pre-School Initiative Program. The School Board Budget Committee has reviewed items and are considering the following six (6) priorities:
 - a. 2% salary increase
 - b. Comprehensive Services Act (CSA) payment of \$250,000 to the Board of Supervisors
 - c. FICA payment for Virginia Retirement System (VRS) 1% transition
 - d. Installation of ARC flash standards
 - e. Travel for bus driver training
 - f. Additional funding for substitutes (which has been consistently over budget for the last 3 years)

The Standards of Quality (SOQ) does not cover all individuals currently employed by the school system. Therefore, in order to provide a 2% raise for all employees, budget cuts will be necessary.

2. The school division is in the process of implementing the new Health Care Act. When the Act was released, there was a deadline of March 1, 2013, for implementation. However, the school system will not be held accountable to this deadline until a final notification is provided relative to the implementation of this Act.
3. A listing of the recruitment schedule for 2012-2013 was provided. This is a preliminary list and may change. At this time, there are ten (10) teachers who do not plan to return for the 2013-2014 school year. There are also seven (7) positions being filled with part-time or ERIP personnel during the 2012-2013 school year. It is anticipated that these positions will be filled for the 2013-2014 school year. There are also six (6) classified positions to fill for 2013-2014. There is always a need for bus drivers.

Mrs. Wanda A. Vaughan, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, addressed the following items:

1. A copy of the 2013-2014 calendar was provided. There were very few comments received about the calendar proposal. Because Easter falls around the Standards of Learning testing schedule, Spring Break will be during the month of March, 2014. Students and staff will be out the Friday and Monday surrounding Easter Sunday. The 2013-2014 school calendar is very similar to this year's calendar with this exception.
2. Information relative to the Graduate of Merit program was provided. There are currently 112 candidates for Graduate of merit. The criteria were increased for the 2012-2013 school year. The Graduate of Merit program provides a great partnership with businesses, citizens and the school system. The 2013 Graduate of Merit program will be held on Thursday, May 16, 2013, at 6:00 p.m. at the Averett Convocation Center, Danville, Virginia.
3. Class size and pupil/teacher ratio information was provided. Grades kindergarten through three have stringent standards. A trend analysis was also provided which indicated how class sizes have changed over the last few years. Resources teachers have been assigned to classrooms because of recent budget cuts.
4. The school division is required to provide an academic plan to students leaving middle school. Tours are conducted at the Pittsylvania Career & Technical Center for students to determine interest in pursuing any of the career programs offered. These tours were scheduled to be conducted prior to the Standards of Learning (SOL) testing periods.
5. The Pittsylvania County Schools' Statistical Profile brochure was provided. This brochure includes information relative to accreditation ratings, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and the Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO), Standards of Learning results by grade level, scholastic aptitude test results, Stanford 9/10 results, on-time graduation rates, completion rate for ninth grade students entering high school, textbook adoptions, September 30 Membership, and free and reduced lunches.

Dr. Jeff Early, Assistant Superintendent for Operations, addressed the following items:

1. The installations of the computers in the high schools will be completed soon. There will be some computers repurposed for other classrooms. Also, the Information Technology staff is in the process of installing projectors in the classrooms.
2. The Crisis Management Plan is being reviewed. The Crisis Management Team has been completing assessments in the schools and providing relative comments to the principals. Any comments or concerns relative to crisis management should be provided to Dr. Early.

The Superintendent addressed the following items:

1. Representatives expressed their appreciation for the early notification of impending inclement weather and the expectation of a call for the delay or closing of schools. It was noted that parents would prefer to receive calls the evening before rather than at 6:00 a.m. the next morning. In emergency situations, the AlertNOW system is used to call all contact numbers in order to ensure the information is received appropriately. The AlertNOW system is funded through a partnership with Cook Composites who provides approximately \$8,000 and from Title I money (approximately \$14,000). Representatives were also informed that if a missed call is received from the School Board Office, a return call may be made to the Central Office and the caller will be encouraged to listen to the radio or television or visit the website relative to the delay or closing of schools.

2. Regional meetings to review the Sheriff's school safety initiatives have been scheduled at each of the high schools. The Sheriff will request feedback on these initiatives from the community and parents. After meeting with Sheriff Mike Taylor, the school staff clarified and prioritized the seven (7) safety initiatives as follows:
 - a. Put a school resource officer in every school
State Police and Sheriff's Office representatives are currently coming into the schools to check on things.
 - b. Employ locked entry doors at the front of school with a camera and intercom system that would allow someone at a desk in the main office to see who is there and buzz them in (cost would be \$1,500 – \$3,500 per school)
 - c. Restrict the number of entrances to the schools and make sure all doors are locked. The possibility has been discussed of having some type of keyless entry for teacher access to the school in order to eliminate the key issue (losing or misplacing keys).
 - d. Continually train staff and conduct emergency actions
There was a SWAT training held at Twin Springs Elementary School recently. It is anticipated that another training will be held at a smaller elementary school. The training would need to include new hires, substitutes and staff relative to the implementation of emergency plans of action. Surprise lock downs are being conducted in the schools to monitor and access how well they are doing this in the schools
 - e. Employ anonymous tip lines
 - f. Have surveillance cameras and central monitoring
This item would require hardware installation and personnel to monitor the cameras.
 - g. Employ metal detectors at some entrances
For our school system, this would be a logistical nightmare because of the number of students entering the building at one time and the need to have someone to monitor this.

The Sheriff's Office and State Police have received a copy of the floor plans for each school. It was suggested that dummy cameras be set up throughout the

school and to spot check with handheld metal detectors which may deter students/staff/visitors from bring unauthorized items into the schools. It was also suggested that training of staff be the #2 priority and to include faculty to work in unison with the SRO.

3. A Sick Leave Policy Taskforce has been developed to review the possibility of allowing employees to designate sick leave days to another employee. If this plan were to be approved, there would be a need for a contractual agreement with no financial obligation.
4. A Staff Dress Code Taskforce has also been developed with employees serving from each school and department.
5. A partnership has been formed with Danville Community College to implement a precision machining program for the school system. This is a unique opportunity to install a lab at the Pittsylvania Career & Technical Center for students to be able to earn an intermediate certificate through the school system. With this certificate, the student would be eligible to enroll with 15 hours of credit and complete the advanced program at Danville Community College. Staff members are currently working on short-term and long-term plans for the precision machining program. This information will be presented to the School Board at its February 12, 2013, meeting for consideration.

The Superintendent asked if there were any suggestions on how to improve this meeting. No comments were provided.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:17 p.m.