

MINUTES OF CITIZENS' ADVISORY COUNCIL
PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY SCHOOLS
March 26, 2013

A meeting of the Citizens' Advisory Council was held on Tuesday, March 26, 2013, at 1:00 p.m. at the School Administration Office, Chatham, Virginia. There were nine (9) representatives present.

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

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 School Board policy relative to teachers being drunk in public/DUI (driving under the influence).
School Board policy does address the use of alcohol or drugs on campus or any vehicle owned by the Pittsylvania County School Board. The school system is required to assist employees experiencing problems with alcohol/drugs to work through the process. Unless the behavior is presented by the employee as a problem, there may be disciplinary issues up to and including termination of employment. Bus drivers receive random drug testing and must complete a physical each year. Any driver found to be under the influence is subject to losing their Commercial Driver's License (CDL) as well as disciplinary action up to and including termination. A situation has occurred where the employee was charged but was not on school property or in a school-owned vehicle. An employee whose responsibility includes teaching driver education would not be allowed to teach this subject for a period of time as determined by the Department of Motor Vehicles. These issues are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The School Board could take action if the Superintendent is driving the county-owned vehicle and runs through a flashing light.
2. Mr. and Mrs. Bill (Mary) Tice attended the MidAtlantic Parent Summit in Lynchburg, Virginia, recently. One of the topics presented at the Summit was relative to involving dads in the child's education. A brochure was provided on the program entitled "Watch D.O.G.S. (Dads of Great Students). This program addresses the motivational engagement of fathers. A video relative to this program is available (Mrs. Tice has ordered the video).
3. A question was raised about the requirements for Tier I and Tier II volunteers.
Appreciation was expressed to the Advisory Council representatives for bringing this issue to the attention of staff. After a careful review from a

committee comprised of principals and Central Office staff, a new protocol will be implemented for the 2013-2014 school year. It was noted that visitors are welcome in the schools as long as their presence is not disruptive. Visitors would be considered those individuals who are at school to attend conferences, school assembly programs and have lunch or breakfast with their child. These individuals would not be required to complete record checks for the school division. The protocol for Level 1 and Level 2 volunteers was also reviewed.

4. A question was raised about the status of the plans with the Sheriff's Office and the safety evaluations that have been completed for the schools.

The schools are participating in lockdowns during the school year. There have also been unannounced lockdowns conducted by staff. An assessment was completed and discussed with the principals after these lockdown events. The staff looks at how fast the lockdown occurs and determines if all appropriate protocol is followed. The Pittsylvania County Sheriff's Office deputies and investigators are visiting the schools on a consistent basis. The following list shows the number of visits made at each school between December, 2012, and February, 2013. These numbers do not reflect any visits that may have been made by the Virginia State Police.

- i. Mt. Airy Elementary School – 15
- ii. Hurt Elementary School – 9
- iii. Gretna Elementary School – 15
- iv. Gretna Middle School – 6
- v. Gretna High School – 6
- vi. Chatham Elementary School – 19
- vii. Chatham Middle School – 17
- viii. Career & Technical Center – 12
- ix. Chatham High School – 6
- x. Southside Elementary School – 19
- xi. Dan River High School – 4
- xii. Kentuck Elementary School – 27
- xiii. Dan River Middle School – 21
- xiv. Alternative – 2
- xv. Union Hall Elementary School – 13
- xvi. Twin Springs Elementary School – 27
- xvii. Tunstall High School – 4
- xviii. Tunstall Middle School – 18
- xix. Brosville Elementary School – 18
- xx. Stony Mill Elementary School - 14

The Crisis Management Plan has been updated and approved by the School Board which includes the protocol to follow for many different situations. The Sheriff's Department is moving forward with its safety initiatives and has held a meeting at each of the four (4) high schools to gather input. There were some negative and some positive comments received. The County Budget for 2013-2014 is being advertised in three

(3) categories: County budget, school budget and safety initiatives. A public hearing on this budget will be held on April 8, 2013. The Board of Supervisors' approval of the budget will determine how to proceed with the safety initiatives.

5. A question was raised about possible road construction and accessibility issues in the Dan River area.

There will be some road construction that will affect the crossroads area, Dan River High School and Kentucky Elementary School. However, no final decisions have been made. The road in front of Dan River High School will be leveled to remove the dip and straighten the road. The Dan River High School sign may have to be moved. The school system is trying to have turn lanes installed. There will be turn lanes at the crossroads. The traffic issue at Kentucky Elementary School has been eased because of the cul-de-sac that was put in the back of the school. It is anticipated that this project will not begin until the summer of 2014.

6. A question was raised about the process to employ teachers and coaches. Individuals submit applications to the Human Resources Office. These applications are reviewed to determine if qualifications for the position are appropriate. Applications are then sent to the principal for review/interview. The principal would make a recommendation for an applicant to fill a position. The Human Resources Office would review the recommendation to ensure the applicant meets all necessary requirements for the position; the Superintendent reviews the recommendation; and then the recommendation is presented to the School Board for final approval. Coaches are also required to complete the application process; however, all necessary paperwork, including the results of a TB test and background check, must be completed before they are allowed to coach.

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

1. The High School Course Selection Guide was provided. There have been some revisions in the guide. These revisions include updated information for the Governor's School, addition of precision machining program at the Career & Technical Center, and changes in the diploma options. It was noted that the Modified Standard Diploma would no longer be an option for graduation beginning with the students enrolling in ninth grade for 2013-2014.
2. The Fall SOL scores were discussed. The math scores were better this year. Last year was a new test for Math which resulted in lower scores. The science assessment was new; however, the scores were relatively good. The English scores were good. Content area meetings for science and English teachers were held to discuss the new tests. These meetings have been helpful on the secondary level.

3. The results for the Preliminary Scholastics Aptitude Test (PSAT) were provided. This assessment, given to all sophomore students, was completed in October. The percentage of change from 2011 to 2012 was also distributed.
4. Because of days missed during the school year, Thursday, March 28, will be a full school day for students. Friday, March 29, this was originally scheduled as a holiday for teachers and students, is now a school day with dismissal for students at 1:00 p.m. Teachers will remain at school for a workday.

In the absence of Dr. Jeff Early, Assistant Superintendent for Operations, the Superintendent addressed the following item:

1. The following is a listing of priorities being completed by the Information Technology Department:
 - SOL testing
 - Graduate of Merit
 - Upgrading bandwidth
 - Installing new high school machines
 - Upgrading office machines and others to Windows 7 (at least 700 machines)
 - Preparing laptop carts
 - Completing the installation of projectors
 - Working with the Career & Technical Center to install equipment purchased by individual schools

The IT staff is completing an assessment regarding the availability of technology in the schools and making adjustments to ensure that all schools are consistent across the division to provide equitability for all students.

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

1. The Special Education Annual Plan has been reviewed and approved by the Special Education Advisory Council. The majority of the special education funding is based on the information provided in this plan.
2. The Tdap Clinics have been held at the schools. The Tdap (Tetanus-Diphtheria-Pertussis) vaccine is required for students prior to entering the sixth grade.
3. The Modified Standard Diploma will no longer be an option for students entering the ninth grade beginning with the 2013-2014 school year. Students with disabilities will be required to earn verified credits. Options for these students will include the locally awarded verified credits for math and English or to utilize the VMAST testing in order to earn the appropriate credits for graduation with a Standard Diploma.

Dr. Lillian Holland, Assistant Superintendent for Administration, addressed

the following items:

1. The budget proposal for the 2013-2014 school year includes \$15,630,178 in local funding. This funding will provide the opportunity for all employees to receive a 2% increase. The funding provided from State monies will only cover the raise for those employees in SOQ (Standards of Quality) funded positions. The increase in funding will also cover the 1% VRS offsetting salary increase and the anticipated cuts for sequestration (cuts in federal funds). At this time, the total amount to be cut because of sequestration is uncertain. There will be an opportunity to speak to the School Board relative to the budget at its public hearing on March 28, 2013, at 6:00 p.m. The Board of Supervisors will also hold a public hearing on Monday, April 8, 2013, at 7:00 p.m. Representatives were invited to attend these meetings.
2. Employees will receive a bonus in their March, 2013, paycheck of \$250 (full-time) and \$125 (part-time). The School Board wanted to show its appreciation of the hard work of all staff members.
3. Twin Springs Elementary School, Chatham Middle School and Chatham High School are implementing MyLunchMoney as a pilot program in their cafeteria. This program will provide parents the opportunity to have an on-line account to view 14 days of transactions, account balance, prepayment history (how much on account), set meal controls (daily or weekly amount the student can spend) and received low balance e-mail. All of these features will be provided at no charge. The parent will also have the option to pre-pay on-line using a debit or credit card. This feature will require a fee of \$1.95 per school per transaction. Feedback will be requested from parents at these schools. If the feedback is positive, plans are to implement this program for all schools for the 2013-2014 school year. This program is optional. Parents will still have the opportunity to send lunch money every day or every week.
4. Currently, there are 13 classified and 16 certified employees who have indicated that they will not return for the 2013-2014 school session. Positions will be advertised and posted on Friday, March 29, 2013. These vacancies will include bus drivers, teacher aides, custodians, cafeteria workers, HVAC-maintenance, special education assistants, math teacher, science teacher, special education teacher, band instruction, Spanish teacher, librarian and a part-time Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) instructor. Other vacancies may occur prior to July 1, 2013.
5. The Behavior Management Taskforce has reviewed the Student Code of Conduct and made the following recommendations for changes:
 - a. Class 3 – addition of over the counter medicine (unauthorized use, possession or under the influence)
 - b. Class 4 – addition of possession of a controlled substance or illegal drugs
 - c. Class 4 – addition of possession of a weapon or look-alike weapon

The School Board has approved the first reading of this policy. The second and final reading will be presented to the School Board for approval at its April 9, 2013, meeting.

The Superintendent addressed the following items:

1. Social media issues were discussed. A student may be disciplined if they have posted comments on a social media site relative to a teacher which is upsetting and causes a substantial disruption at the school. Teachers have been cautioned relative to friending individuals on social media. Staff needs to be mindful that what is said may be interpreted by a third party in a different way. Employees who have had inappropriate communications have been disciplined appropriately. Social media can be a good thing; however, it can be very negative and disruptive. There was an incident in the Gretna community where a parent indicated on a social media site that someone was going to come and shoot up the school. The school system had to respond to this situation along with the Sheriff's Office.
2. Feedback was requested relative to the inclement weather messages provided through AlertNOW. The representatives have been very pleased with the early communications and the descriptives that are provided.
3. A Dress Code Taskforce was formed to review the possibility of implementing a dress code for staff. As a result of this Taskforce, a proposed policy was developed. The proposal has been reviewed by an attorney and will be presented to the School Board for review at its April 9, 2013, meeting.
4. A Sick Leave Taskforce was formed to develop a policy relative to donating sick leave days to other employees. This Taskforce developed the Voluntary Donation of Sick Leave Days policy proposal which is a parallel program to the Sick Leave Bank. The policy proposal would allow the employee to be out for family members using a donation of sick leave days during the leave period. This proposal has also been reviewed by an attorney and will be presented to the School Board for review at its April 9, 2013, meeting.
5. There were no additional meetings desired for the 2012-2013 school year.

The Superintendent expressed appreciation to the representatives for serving on the Council. The input received has been invaluable. The representatives were asked if there were any suggestions for changes to the meeting. There were no comments provided.

A question was raised about the possibility of charging students to play sports. At this time, the discussion of this issue is premature because the budget funding is uncertain. This was a strategy suggestion to help balance the budget if necessary.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:16 p.m.