

**MINUTES OF TEACHERS' ADVISORY COUNCIL
PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY SCHOOLS
September 26, 2011**

A meeting of the Teachers' Advisory Council was held on Monday, September 26, 2011, at 2:00 p.m. in the School Administration Office, Chatham, Virginia.

Nineteen (19) schools were represented. Also present were Mr. James E. McDaniel, Division Superintendent, Dr. Jeff Early, Assistant Superintendent for Support Services, Dr. Lillian D. Holland, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Mr. Donald R. Johnson, Assistant Superintendent for Business, Mrs. Clarissa T. Knight, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, and Mr. Rickey W. Parker, Assistant Superintendent for Information Technology.

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

The protocol and organization of the Advisory Council was discussed. The purpose of the meeting is to share information about policies, programs and procedures and solicit input and feedback from the representatives relative to division level issues. School level issues should be addressed with the principal of the school. Representatives also have the opportunity to provide topics of discussion to be placed on the agenda or addressed at the meeting. Representatives were encouraged to e-mail topics to the Superintendent, Mrs. Janet Hancock, Clerk of the Board, or any one of the Assistant Superintendents. A notice of the meetings will be e-mailed to Representatives prior to the meeting date. Information not available at the meeting will be included in the minutes after the meeting. These minutes will be posted on the website and will be e-mailed to each Representative.

The following Council topics were discussed:

1. A question was raised about the hours required for open house/conference night. At one school it was indicated that the teachers had student supervision until 3:30 p.m., conference night hours from 3:30 – 6:30 p.m. and a PTO meeting which began at 6:30 p.m. The teachers had no opportunity to eat the food that had been prepared for them.
The time for the conference night is at the discretion of the school administration. The conference night must be at least three (3) hours in length; however, schools are not required to have the time scheduled from 3:30 – 6:30 p.m.
2. A concern was expressed about the Madeline Hunter lesson plan format and if the completion of the lesson plans would be tied to the teacher evaluation. The use of strong lesson plans is a proven good practice. The Instructional Department has recommended the use of the Madeline

Hunter lesson plan format to ensure that lessons are planned and students are receiving the appropriate instruction. The lesson plan design at the individual school is at the discretion of the school administration. Much discussion was provided relative to the time it is taking teachers to write down the lesson plans following this format. The workload for teachers is overwhelming. It was noted that this issue would be discussed with principals to gather feedback in order to revise the process as necessary.

3. A question was raised about the mentor/mentee program and the time it is taking away from instruction. At one school, the students are being instructed on taking notes and writing a resumé. Other schools are using this time to remediate students who are not being successful on the SOL or to have club meetings.

The schools have different ways of implementing a mentor/mentee program. The Representatives were encouraged to discuss these issues with the principal. The principal is charged to administer, plan, coordinate and supervise the activities and schedule for the school building.

4. A question was asked about the Principal Performance Survey being anonymous.

The surveys are mandatory for all new principals and assistant principals. The surveys are anonymous and are received by the Central Office for review. The purpose of the survey is to help the administrators in their professional growth and is not part of the evaluation from the Central Office.

5. A question was raised about the payment of the PD 360 professional development activities.

The school division pays the cost for the PD 360 program which provides professional development activities for staff. Teachers on plans of assistance may also be required to complete specific activities from PD 360. Principals also may require teachers to complete a school-wide activity using the PD 360 program.

6. A concern was expressed about the teachers being required to pay out of pocket for replacement bulbs for the projectors.

State money cannot be used to purchase bulbs for projectors. However, the teacher should not be required to use personal funds for this purpose. Teachers should be encouraged to submit work orders to request the replacement of the bulbs. These bulbs should last 2200 to 2400 hours with an average cost of \$300. The Superintendent indicated that staff would be working to provide support in this area.

7. A concern was expressed about the computers being unplugged when the furniture was moved over the summer for cleaning purposes.
Teachers were encouraged to unplug and store their computers at the end of the school year to prevent any issues.
8. A question was asked about the possibility of receiving a Verizon discount on cell phones.
Interested representatives should be eligible for discounts by providing their school identification.
9. A question was raised about the possibility of donating sick leave days upon retirement to the Sick Leave Bank. It was also requested that employees be allowed bereavement days for family members without having to use sick leave or personal leave days.
The employees have the opportunity to use sick leave and/or personal leave days for bereavement. The donation of sick leave days to the Sick Leave Bank would require a change in policy. The staff will review the policy and present any changes to the School Board for approval.
10. A question was raised about the top of the salary scale.
Employees have not received a raise in four (4) years. The school division has no money to provide a raise. There is no guarantee that there will be any raises for the upcoming school year. However, the School Board has continued to increase the employer amount paid toward health insurance. The school division is funded at the minimum amount required by the State. The good news is that there have been no job cuts. The School Board is aware of the morale issues related to salaries.
11. A question was raised about scan cards for employees in the schools.
There have been some issues with the scan cards used at the high schools to access the buildings. These problems are being addressed as quickly as possible.
12. A complaint was expressed about the adult portions in the elementary school cafeterias.
The portions served in the cafeteria are regulated by the federal government. Each school allocates portion sizes based on the age level of the students at the particular school. The adult lunch cost is not subsidized by the federal government, and the student lunch cost is subsidized by the federal government; therefore, higher prices are charged to adults due to the difference in subsidies not because of portion size. Everyone gets the same portion. The Central Office School Nutrition Office will work with all of the cafeteria managers and staff to communicate that staff members may request an increase in the

portion size of side foods items only as a way to accommodate their nutritional needs.

13. A request was made to change the first pay period to August instead of September.

The schedule for the paychecks is set up for ten-month employees based on the health insurance, dental insurance and voluntary deductions. The health and dental insurance is effective October 1 with the premium being taken out of the September – June payroll check. This issue may be solved for most employees (with the exception of new teachers) if the school system would implement mandatory 12-month installment. This would not help the beginning ten-month employee because the first paycheck would still be issued at the end of September. If the system were to change to a nine-month deduction period rather than a ten-month period, the costs of the deductions would be higher.
14. A question was raised about the possibility of updates for MicroSoft programs. There are some attachments that come in and cannot be opened on some computers.

Employees with newer versions (2007 or 2010) should be encouraged to change the default to be compatible with older versions of MicroSoft Office. Those who have older versions of MicroSoft Office and would like to be able to open docX files may submit a work order for the conversion tool to be installed.
15. A question was raised about the time which constitutes one-half day.

The timeframe for ½ days would be at the discretion of the school principal. The administrator may grant a professional courtesy in certain circumstances. However, if this becomes a practice, the employee would need to request appropriate leave time.
16. Concerns were expressed about the special education classrooms containing too many students in different grades.

Teachers should contact Mr. Al Klugh, Supervisor of Special Education, to address this issue.
17. A question was raised concerning policies about compensatory time.

There are two classifications for employees – certified (professional) staff and classified staff. The certified staff members are exempt from overtime and do not receive compensatory time. The classified staff members may earn compensatory time; however, the time must be taken with the same work week.

Mr. Donald R. Johnson, Assistant Superintendent for Business, addressed the following items:

1. After many delays by the Pittsylvania County Board of Supervisors, three (3) storage buildings are being built (one each at Tunstall High School, Dan River High School and Gretna High School). Also, construction has begun at Chatham High School to upgrade the athletic fields (softball and soccer) and a new regulation track. Funds from one-time revenues are being used to complete these capital projects.
2. The proposed budget calendar for the 2012-2013 budget year was distributed. The Federal Jobs Program funding of \$2.4 million will not be available after the 2011-2012 school year. This money was used to fund forty-two (42) positions (teachers and teacher aides). Another jobs program is currently being discussed by President Obama. The school division has been cut over \$10 million in the last four (4) years.

Mrs. Clarissa T. Knight, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, addressed the following item:

1. A personnel update was provided. There were eighty-seven (87) employees who retired or resigned at the end of the 2010-2011 school year. There were eighty-eight (88) individuals hired for the 2011-2012 school year. Four (4) positions were not filled for 2011-2012. Currently there are four (4) positions being advertised. These include: Family and Consumer Science teacher, teacher aide position, cafeteria position and Spanish Teacher. A recommendation has been received for each position with the exception of the Spanish Teacher.

Mr. Rickey W. Parker, Assistant Superintendent for Information Technology, addressed the following item:

1. The computers for staff and students in the elementary schools are being replaced. The school system cannot retain old computer equipment because of licensing issues and costs. Equipment that is no longer usable will be destroyed. Approximately \$450,000.00 was spent on new equipment. Teachers were encouraged to submit work orders if there were old computers in their classrooms.

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

1. An update was provided on the Standards of Learning (SOL), Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and No Child Left Behind (NCLB). The NCLB Act was up for reauthorization four (4) years ago; however, this has not occurred. This is now being referred to as ESEA (Elementary and Secondary Education Act) rather than NCLB. There is not Act to replace NCLB at this time.

2. For the 2011-2012 school year, the percentage of passing to meet the Annual Measureable Objectives (AMO) was 91% for reading and 90% for mathematics. In three (3) years, the percentages will increase to 100%. Principals have discussed with teachers the possibilities of looking at R10 which would mean there had been a 10% reduction in failures from the previous year. It is uncertain how the addition of the Asian sub-group will affect these scores.
3. The school division had 38.88% of the students making AYP for 2011-2012. This was based on SOL taken during the 2010-2011 school year. The State's percentage was only 38% which represents 1,839 schools making AYP. There were seven (7) schools in Pittsylvania County making AYP – Brosville Elementary School, Chatham Elementary School, Hurt Elementary School, Mt. Airy Elementary School, Union Hall Elementary School, Dan River High School and Tunstall High School. The Representatives were encouraged to share the information at their respective schools. The Superintendent of Public Instruction has recommended a waiver of these unrealistic requirements.
4. A concern was expressed relative to teachers having no incentives to continue to help students to be successful on the SOL. The Superintendent indicated that offering merit or incentive pay would be very subjective and not objective and could create morale issues.
5. A graduation status report was provided. The number of seniors at risk of graduating with a standard diploma is very low. AYP is measured by graduation and includes only students graduating with a standard or advanced standard diploma. The State of Virginia, however, does recognize all other diplomas for graduation.
6. The Calendar Committee will begin meeting in November, 2011, to review and consider the 2012-2013 school calendar. Representatives were encouraged to provide ideas and suggestions to Dr. Holland prior to November 9, 2011.

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

1. Working with the Pittsylvania County Department of Health, the middle schools will host clinics to provide flu shots and mists for students, staff and individuals in the communities. The times and dates for the clinics were provided. Any questions relative to the shots or the clinics should be addressed by the family physician or the health department.
2. A new grant-funded position has been created to work with the Project Connect Program to assist in working with the FAMIS insurance plan. The

person in this position would be charged with determining the qualifications of students and signing them up for insurance.

The Superintendent addressed the following item:

1. The Pittsylvania County School Board Student Representatives will be featured in an article in the October Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA) newsletter. The School Board and staff are very proud of the Student Representatives.

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 4:05 p.m.