

**MINUTES OF TEACHERS' ADVISORY COUNCIL
PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY SCHOOLS
March 30, 2015**

A meeting of the Teachers' Advisory Council was held on Monday, March 30, 2015, at 2:00 p.m. at the School Administration Office, Chatham, Virginia.

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

Mr. James E. McDaniel, Division Superintendent, called the meeting to order and welcomed those in attendance. Introductions followed.

The protocol for submitting Council topics was implemented, and a compiled listing of the submitted topics was provided to the Representatives. The listing also included a space for any comments that the Representatives may wish to note. The Superintendent suggested that this listing be placed in a notebook and put in the school library to provide an opportunity for staff to review the information. Additional listings from future Teachers' Advisory meetings could be added to the notebook as appropriate.

The following Council topics were discussed:

| <u>SCHOOL</u> | <u>QUESTION/COMMENT FROM REPRESENTATIVES</u> | <u>COMMENTS</u> |
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| Twin Springs Elem. | Are children allowed to stay in school with live lice crawling in their heads although the parent says they have been treated? | Protocol dictates that a student should be sent home with live lice. Upon return to school, the student should be checked to determine that there are no live lice present. It was noted that the students at Twin Springs Elementary School are being sent back to the classroom with live lice. Principals will be reminded of the protocol to follow. There may be instances where the student may need to be monitored if the parent is delayed in picking up the child. |
| Twin Springs Elem. | Can we please look into the lice policy and sending children home with lice? Students are being allowed to stay in school with nits (live eggs) with the possibility of hatching at any | Students may remain in school if there are nits present. The school system does not provide lice kits to the parents. |

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| | <p>time. This allows live ones to spread throughout the classroom. Also, can we start sending letters home when there is a known case?</p> | <p>However, a parent information sheet is provided when issues are identified.</p> <p>Information relative to lice will be shared with parents at the beginning of the school and as needed. The school may also contact the Social Services Department if there are recurring cases.</p> |
| Twin Springs Elem. | <p>Can bag lunches be provided on early dismissal days?</p> | <p>Bag lunches may be provided if the early dismissal is planned in advance. In the event that schools must close because of inclement weather, the cafeteria staff may already be in the process of preparing a hot lunch. The school system does everything possible to ensure students receive lunch before leaving for the day.</p> |
| Twin Springs Elem. | <p>Have early dismissal days to end at 11:30 a.m. rather than 1:00 p.m. (If a teacher takes a half day, they either leave or arrive at 11:30 a.m.)</p> | <p>Ending the school day at 11:30 a.m. would impact food services, bus schedules and instructional time. The 2015-2016 school calendar has already been approved with several 1:00 p.m. dismissal days. However, this concept may be discussed for the 2016-2017 school calendar. One issue with an 11:30 a.m. dismissal may be parents not being at home which would require the bus drivers to bring the students back to school.</p> |
| Twin Springs Elem. | <p>Will there be any incentives like a cost of living bonus that some of the other counties are doing?</p> | <p>The School Board has not discussed a bonus for this Spring. Employees did receive a 1% salary increase for the 2014-2015 school year. A salary increase of 1½% is being proposed by the School Board for the 2015-2016 school year.</p> |
| Twin Springs Elem. | <p>Is there any way that we could do MAP testing after SOL testing next year?</p> | <p>The process for MAP testing will be reviewed at the June principals' meeting. Interactive</p> |

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| <p>Tunstall Middle</p> | <p>Concern about the number of instructional days that are lost due to testing. English loses at least three (3) days each time we do MAP testing. We also have to do common assessments on IA once each six weeks. In addition, we have to administer a writing test with a prompt, which can take several days to complete. At the very least, we have missed 15 instructional days due to testing.</p> | <p>Achievement (IA) tests are also used for formative assessments throughout the school year.</p> <p>A concern was expressed about not being able to ungrade an IA test in order to use as a teaching tool for the classroom. Mrs. Vaughan will check on the availability of copying the assessment.</p> |
| <p>Tunstall Middle</p> | <p>What is the purpose of requiring teachers to use IA, if they are to use MAP data to drive the instruction? The students are being tested too much. Officials at the Central Office need to know just how these requirements are affecting instruction.</p> | <p>It was noted that students need to go into the lab and use the TestNav in order to be successful on the assessments.</p> |
| <p>Gretna Elem.</p> | <p>End-of-year testing –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Please consider moving the end-of-year MAP and IA window to after the SOL tests are over. Because primary grades are testing also, the labs and laptops are unavailable to 3rd-5th grades during much needed SOL review time. 2. Please consider doing away with the MAP testing program and use Interactive Achievement only. Alternatively, use MAP for primary grades and IA for elementary grades. | <p>There has been concern expressed relative to the timing of the completion of the MAP tests. All teachers have now been trained on the MAP system, and it is anticipated that these assessments will begin earlier for the 2015-2016 school year.</p> <p>A request was made to bring keyboarding classes back into the schools to provide students more than six (6) weeks of exploratory instruction.</p> <p>A suggestion was made to create a dummy student in the IA system to provide a way for the teacher to review the assessments with students.</p> <p>A concern was expressed about having the MAP testing after the SOL assessments. A suggestion was also provided to consider giving the MAP assessments twice a year.</p> <p>Consideration will be given to these suggestions.</p> |

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| Twin Springs Elem. | Concern about not having Staggered Entry anymore for Kindergarten | All ten (10) elementary schools have agreed to the elimination of the staggered entry for kindergarten students. The School Board has approved this elimination. It was noted that the Brigance testing will be completed prior to the beginning of the school year for availability to the kindergarten teachers on the first day of school. |
| Dan River High | Concern about limited bandwidth available to the schools for legitimate applications that teachers need in order to meet their competencies within their classroom. | All of the bandwidth is provided for instructional purposes; however, there are some individuals that may be using it for non-instructional purposes. Hopefully, additional bandwidth will be available for next year and improvements should be notable. |
| Dan River High | I would like to know why the TV screens (signage boards) cannot be fixed. Would seem to me that we have a lot of money invested in these TV's for them to sit on the walls not working. | There have been some problems; however, the Information Technology Department is reviewing alternatives and hopes to have this issue resolved soon. |
| Tunstall High | What is the status on the high school TV/Monitor situation? Is there a target date when we might have use of them for news/bulletins? Are they repairable? | |
| Chatham High | Do STEM teachers have different work hours (shorter) than other teachers in the County? | All teachers, including the STEM teachers, work from 8:10 a.m. until 3:35 p.m. or its equivalent as stipulated in School Board policy. |
| Chatham High | How do STEM teachers get evaluated since evaluations are based on SMART goals and graded activities? Are STEM teachers exempt from grading work and compiling a binder with student work in such? How is a binder to be kept with no pre-test and post-test data? | The STEM teachers are evaluated using the same protocol as other teachers. The pre-and post-data may not be the same; however, the STEM teachers are required to keep data relative to goals they have set for the STEM Academy. Directors are evaluated under the same process as administrators and goals-setting is a part of their evaluation as well. |

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| Chatham High | What is the compensation plan for the extra days? | There is no compensation for extra days. The Code of Virginia stipulates that students must go to school 180 days or 990 hours each year. A chart showing days when schools were dismissed early, delayed or closed for the 2014-2015 school year was provided. Teachers did not work during these times as well. |
| Chatham High Chatham High | <p>Why does the County not have a County-wide dress code for students at the high school level? Middle school level? Elementary school level? If a County-wide policy was in place, this would alleviate issues with student transfers from school to school acclimating to the dress code. The dress code would be known in advance and in turn alleviate a major “headache” for principals. There is a County-wide policy for teachers so why not follow suit.</p> <p>Just a reminder to bring up the idea of a county-wide dress code for each level of schools (elementary, middle, high). <u>Purpose/Pros:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a uniform dress code county-wide to alleviate issues with students transferring to different schools with different codes. 2. There is a county-wide dress code for teachers, why should student dress code be any different? 3. Should not be a "local autonomy" issue...definitely a division one. (It would not be acceptable for a principal to allow spaghetti straps or booty shorts etc. in a particular school if they chose to. At that point, the Central Office would step in to alter this decision, so the dress code should start at the Central Office level to begin with....demonstrates that dress codes do not fulfill the idea of complete autonomy in the first place). 4. Alleviates undo work and stress of administrators coming up with and/or altering dress codes each year. Also, they can say "It's | The school system does have a County-wide policy relative to dress code which addresses inappropriate, obscene, disruptive or unsafe dress. The School Board attorney has advised to not be specific in policy. School improvement plans include a school climate committee. This issue may be addressed to this committee to determine a more definitive dress expectation for the school. This information should be placed in the school handbook. Representatives were reminded that input should be obtained from the school staff and community before decisions are made relative to dress code. |

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| | <p>county policy" when having to address complaints. Takes pressure off of them.</p> <p><u>Cons:</u></p> <p>1. A county-wide dress code would require additional time spent to consult with all administrators and for them to agree on one code, however, that time would only be spent once. It will be simple after that time is spent initially.</p> | |
| Mt. Airy Elem. | The grading scale should be changed to a 10-point scale to be consistent with other counties | <p>A change in the grading scale would require modification of School Board policy. Changes should be discussed with the school principal and Central Office staff. If appropriate, a committee would be formed to discuss advantages/disadvantages for the change. This information would then be provided to the Superintendent for review before presenting to the School Board for approval. The Teachers' Advisory Council could request a meeting of the Grading and Reporting Committee to review this issue.</p> |
| Tunstall Middle | Will the County consider putting together a committee to set up standards on accountability for middle school children in reference to attendance and SOL pass rates? | The Truancy Team would address this issue. School Board policy is followed for promotion and retention. More clarification may be needed to ensure accountability is addressed. |
| Tunstall Middle | Our building attendance clerk works very hard to ensure students have notes for days missed and being tardy, but we have no serious consequence in place for students who are repeatedly out of school. Many times the same students miss 2-3 times each week. Ultimately the lack of a serious consequence for extreme absenteeism leads to very bad habits that result in poor grades. | The attendance policy provides specific information relative to excused and unexcused absences. Additional regulations for middle school students stipulate that make-up work is not allowed for work missed during the school day. The Truancy Management Team works with families and ensures that School Board policies relative to attendance are followed. Judge Turpin has bragged about the attendance in Pittsylvania County Schools. He |

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| | | <p>is also very concerned about this issue and will take the children out of the home if they are considered truant.</p> <p>The number of “mommy notes” accepted is determined by the school administration. If these notes become excessive, the issue needs to be addressed.</p> <p>A concern was expressed relative to a student not being given an excused absence to attend a religious event. The Educational Opportunity Form should have been completed and provided to the school administration.</p> <p>There are eight (8) reasons for excused absences listed in the policy; however, principals should assess absence situations and make decisions based on the merits of the circumstances.</p> |
| Tunstall Middle | SOL pass rates – every year it seems that our students have a greater sense of apathy in regards to grades and SOL scores. Middle school children really need to be held to a higher standard. They are often unmotivated and this problem is getting worse. The teachers, schools, and division are the only entities held accountable for passing SOL scores at the middle school level. | Virginia Code 20-131-30 indicates that schools shall use Virginia assessment program test results in K-8 as part of a set of multiple criteria for determining the promotion or retention of students. |
| Gretna Middle | The science textbooks are falling apart. The covers are not glued on properly. The textbook company should replace all of these defective books. They should not have passed quality control at the manufacturing plant. A representative from the company should be called and steps should be taken to ensure we get what we pay to receive. | This issue has not been reported to the Central Office. If there is an issue with the textbooks, Representatives were requested to make the principal aware and provide information to the Lead Director for Science. Upon receipt of this information, contact will be made with the company. |
| Gretna Middle | Why does the Governor’s salary budget differ from the County’s salary budget for next year (the Governor’s salary budget is listed at 3% | The Governor’s budget did not include a raise. However, both the House and the Senate |

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| | raise)? | budgets included a 1½% raise for 2015-2016 school year. |
| Southside Elem. | <p>A teacher at Southside Elementary School is out on medical leave. She has exhausted the sick leave bank and down to her last two (2) personal leave days. She is out under a doctor's note through March 20. She is being docked her last personal day because she is missing conference night. At this point she is planning to come in for conference night even though she will be extremely sick (and has a doctor's note to be out). She feels that she has no choice at this point because she is soon facing many days missed without pay. If a teacher is out on medical leave, the teacher should not be docked an extra day for missing a conference night.</p> <p>Why do teachers have to take a whole day of personal or sick leave for parent/teacher conference nights? Why is it not a half day when we only work an additional 3 -3 ½ hours (which is a half-day of work)?</p> | <p>The Standards of Accreditation (VAC 20-440-20) defines the contractual period for teachers as 200 days which includes 180 student days (or 990 instructional hours), 10 days for activities and 10 days for continuation of activities and other activities as may be assigned or approved by the local school board.</p> |
| Southside Elem. | <p>Do we have a protocol for donating sick days to those employed by Pittsylvania County Schools that have a long term illness and exhaust the sick leave bank? If not, can we get one in place to help our co-workers when a long term illness occurs?</p> | <p>The school system does not have anything in place at this time to allow employees to donate sick leave days to other employees. Employees covered under the VRS Hybrid plan are eligible for short-term and long-term leave benefits. Other employees have the opportunity to participate in the Sick Leave Bank.</p> <p>The Superintendent will be meeting with individuals at Southside Elementary School to discuss this matter.</p> |
| Southside Elem. | <p>Why do we have to come to school on Feb. 20, when we have 6 banked days?</p> | <p>The School Board approves a calendar which includes make-up days. The calendar dictates the days school is in session including priority make-up days as needed.</p> <p>The School Board approves the work day schedule which</p> |

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| | | includes an extra 10 minutes for teachers and 12 minutes for students. This approval ensures that Spring Break will not be lost to be used as make-up days. |
| Stony Mill Elem. | A health fair/wellness screening was held in Aug. 2014. Will there be one in August, 2015? | Staff members are working with the Health Department to provide a wellness screening. It is anticipated that this screen will be conducted on January 4 and 5, 2016, at four (4) sites throughout the County. |
| Stony Mill Elem. | Are we getting a bonus this school year before May 2015? | It is not anticipated that a bonus will be provided to employees. |
| Stony Mill Elem. | Why is there inconsistency with regards to individual schools and their summer policies regarding employee badges? Schools that collect these badges at the end of the school year deprive their teachers of summer time discounts at teacher supply stores, bookstores, book fairs, etc. Many amusement parks offer teacher discount days in the summer with a valid teacher ID. This policy should be consistent throughout the county so that some teachers are not placed at a financial disadvantage-especially when they are spending personal funds on items for work. | The Central Office staff was unaware of employee badges having to be turned in at the end of the school year. Dr. Early will discuss this with the principals at the April 16, 2015, Principals' Meeting. |
| Stony Mill Elem. | Why are elementary students required to be allowed to make up their work when they have unexcused absences, but high school and middle school students are not? This is not fair to elementary teachers who must find time throughout the day to test these students and allow them to make up work. With only 30-40 min. of daily planning, this is not practical. This policy should be consistent throughout the county. | According to School Board Policy JED-PC, Student Absences/Excuses/Dismissals, an absence will be unexcused if the student is suspended. Elementary students have the opportunity to make up work within a reasonable amount of time as determined by the teacher. |
| Stony Mill Elem. | What can Pittsylvania County Schools do to enforce attendance and truancy? We have students who have missed over 20 days with just a handful of those days being excused. These students and their parents are not being held accountable. If these elementary students were not automatically allowed to make up work from their unexcused absences, then perhaps that would motivate parents to bring their children to school. | Any changes in this School Board Policy would need to be reviewed by the Grading and Reporting Committee. |

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| Stony Mill Elem. | After reading the budget proposal for next year, it appears we will be losing access to a great teaching tool, Discovery Education Streaming. Is this the case? If so, can we reconsider this decision? | <p>United Streaming costs approximately \$20,000.00 and is expected to increase. To save money, the video streaming will be available through the E-Media program which is a free product.</p> <p>Representatives were asked to contact Mrs. Cathy Scolpini, Lead ITRT, if a password is needed for the E-Media program.</p> |
| Tunstall High | When we are on a two-hour delay due to hazardous road conditions, Mr. McDaniel's announcement indicates that the decision is made "for the safety of our students and staff." Please consider allowing the same concern for safety for office personnel {secretary, bookkeeper, assistants and principal[s]} who are currently required to report at regular opening time. | For a two-hour delay, employees report at regular time or as soon as road conditions permit. These individuals are valued employees; however, they are needed at the school in order to be prepared for the arrival of the students. |
| Tunstall High | <p>Security camera system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They have not been completely functional for a while – when can we expect the cameras to be repaired? • There are no cameras covering upper floors or stairwells making these areas more vulnerable. Any plans to install cameras in these areas in the foreseeable future? • What is the status on recording status? Often, essential camera footage has not been available. Unless someone constantly monitors cameras or by chance catches an incident at the precise moment it occurs, schools are left without important information for intervention. Footage is crucial in any matters that need to be investigated further, internally or by the police. | <p>The system is not functioning properly and is at the end of its life. The old analog system is being replaced with new digital cameras. These new cameras will be incorporated into the newly installed security system. Funds for the new system were partially provided by the State Security Grant.</p> <p>It is anticipated to have the new cameras integrated at Tunstall High School by the end of this school year.</p> |
| Tunstall High | Why does PCS require some people to go through the full interview process when applying for a job opening while others do not? If there is a set process, why isn't it thoroughly followed for every vacancy? | The selection process for administrators was provided. A team interviews candidates for administrative vacancies and then determines strengths and weaknesses. The top 2-3 candidates for principal position |

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| | | <p>are recommended to the Superintendent. The Superintendent interviews and presents a recommendation to the School Board.</p> <p>This protocol for the selection of administrators may be posted on the Human Resources website.</p> |
| Tunstall High | <p>Some of the faculty sent e-mails to Mr. McDaniel with input prior to the final hiring decision for our new principal. We all got identical responses saying: "The Pittsylvania County School Board has set goals and standards for school-community relations and for achieving good communication among the schools, parents, community organizations, businesses and the industrial sector." For future reference and to ensure that input is more relevant to decision makers, please provide a list or narrative of these goals and standards so that comments may be framed to reflect them.</p> | <p>It was noted that the interview process had been completed at the time these e-mails were received.</p> |
| Tunstall High | <p>Thank you to everyone for all of your hard work, innovation and support. Your efforts, whatever your responsibilities might be, make us better able to realize the successful outcomes we hope for with our best efforts in our learning communities.</p> | |

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

- ◆ The School Board met on Thursday, March 26, 2015 and passed the 2015-2016 school budget. This budget has been provided to the Pittsylvania County Board of Supervisors for final approval. The Board of Supervisors will meet on April 6, 2015, to review and approve the budget proposal. Based on General Assembly action, the School Board budget includes a 1½% raise for employees. The General Assembly only included money for this raise for Standards of Quality (SOQ) funded positions. The School Board is requesting the additional money from the Board of Supervisors to provide the raise to all employees. The 2015-2016 budget includes additional funding from the State, adjustment in the Virginia Retirement System (VRS) employer rate, Medicaid Recovery reimbursements, ERIP attrition and health insurance savings. The priority for the School Board was providing a raise for all employees. There will also be a 1% salary offset for employees covered the Virginia Retirement System. Other priorities included the emergency communication system (Connect 5), three (3) teaching positions to meet federal compliance, Career

Academy program and hiring an assistant principal at the Pittsylvania Career & Technical Center.

- ◆ Current vacancies for the 2015-2016 school year include: nine (9) classified positions (2 administrative assistants, 1 maintenance, 3 teacher aides, 1 mechanic and 2 cafeteria workers); and thirty (30) certified positions (4 administrators, 1 psychologist, 1 physical therapist, 2 speech therapist and 22 teachers).
- ◆ Beginning June 1, 2014, to present, there are thirty-four (34) employees who have retired or will retire July 1, 2015. This number includes 15 classified employees, 15 certified employees and 4 administrators.
- ◆ The Student Code of Conduct must be reviewed each year by the Behavior Management Taskforce. There were some required changes from the General Assembly as well as changes in the guidelines from the State which included the removal of the reference to synthetic cannabinoids. The School Board will review the policy changes for approval in May and June, 2015.
- ◆ A copy of the 2014-2015 salary schedule was provided. Employees did not move up a step for 2014-2015 but did receive a 1% salary increase. This practice will continue for the 2015-2016 school year with employees receiving a 1½% salary but no increase in step. The employees are continuing to receive experience credit for the Virginia Retirement System.

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

- ◆ A copy of the High School Course Selection Guide for 2015-2016 was provided.
- ◆ The schedule for the 2015 graduation ceremonies was presented. Dan River High School will graduate on Friday, May 22, 2015, and all other high schools are scheduled on Saturday, May 23, 2015.
- ◆ The results of the Fall 2014 Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments for the high schools were reviewed. It was noted that Chatham Middle School administered the SOL tests during the Fall of 2014 in Grades 7 Civics and Grade 8 Science. Gretna Middle School also administered the Grade 8 Science assessment. These scores will be added to the Spring results. The results only included the summer and first semester scores. The second semester scores will be added to these results.
- ◆ A copy of the Fall 2014 PSAT results was provided.
- ◆ The changes in the 2014-2015 school calendar were discussed. This calendar is posted on the website.

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

- ◆ The Information Technology Department is currently working on the following projects:
 - Support of the SOL testing to ensure everything is working correctly is a priority
 - Graduate of Merit Scholarship Program
 - Installing school purchased equipment

- Installing computer labs at Hurt Elementary School and Mt. Airy Elementary School
- Putting laptop carts at Chatham Middle School and the Pittsylvania Career & Technical Center
- Updating the wireless system throughout the division
- Installing computers in the middle school science classrooms
- Updating the switching
- Increasing the bandwidth
- Updating the signage at the high schools
- Conducting SmartBoard training during the summer (a link will be provided to register for the beginning training and the advanced training)
- ◆ Appreciation was expressed to the Representatives for their participation in the recent Tornado Drill.

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

- ◆ In collaboration with the Pittsylvania County Health Department, the schools hosted Tetanus-Diphtheria-Pertussis (Tdap) vaccine clinics. Of the 676 students going into middle school next year, 304 received the immunization in one of these clinics. There were 143 students who had received the vaccine prior to the date of the clinics. There are 229 students that still need to receive the Tdap vaccine. The Health Department has also assisted with the flu clinics. It is anticipated that information regarding the flu and Tdap clinics will be provided to the parents at the beginning of the school year.
- ◆ The Medicaid Recovery program allows the school system to request reimbursement for services such as physical, occupational or speech therapy. As of this date, the Division has been reimbursed \$169,634 with more revenue to come in over the summer months.

The Superintendent addressed the following item:

- ◆ An update on the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Academy was provided. Grant funding was received from the Danville Regional Foundation to implement this program for the 2014-2015 school year. Additional grant funding is being requested to add grades 4, 6 and 8 at the STEM Academy and to implement a new program, Beyond the Bell. This program would be for a three-year period for the ten (10) elementary schools to offer after-school programs to help with homework, science discovery, junior achievement, cultural arts, recreational and nutritional programs, literacy and mathematics, life skills, community service projects and Robotics, chess, and building Legos. If the grant funding is approved, 60 students at each elementary school will have the opportunity to participate. The criterion for student eligibility has not been determined at this time; however, an application process would be established. The program would consist of part-time employees (a director, 4 teachers for each school, an administrator at

each school, and 2 teacher aides for each school) Transportation would be provided but would not be door to door. It is anticipated that a decision will be provided by the Danville Regional Foundation in early summer. There may be individuals in the community interested in areas such as the Junior Achievement which may not require a teaching license. Cost of materials for the program at \$50,000 has been included in the grant proposal. Also, as funding becomes available, the program may possibly extend to the middle schools. The 21st Century program may be a way to transition the students. The director and appropriate administrator would interview and determine the individuals that would offer the best instruction for this program.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:59 p.m.