

**MINUTES OF TEACHERS' ADVISORY COUNCIL
PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY SCHOOLS
November 26, 2012**

A meeting of the Teachers' Advisory Council was held on Monday, November 26, 2012, at 2:00 p.m. in the School Administration Office, Chatham, Virginia.

Eighteen (18) schools were represented. Also present were Mr. James E. McDaniel, Division Superintendent, Mrs. 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 Representatives expressed appreciation for the extra time off during the recent Thanksgiving holiday. The Superintendent expressed his appreciation for the positive feedback on this decision and would hope to provide more incentives during the school year.

The following Council topics were discussed:

Appreciation was expressed for the update to the computers, which are working much better, the new Link It program, and the adjustment to the school calendar to include an additional day off at Thanksgiving and in February. Appreciation was also expressed to the staff for attending the induction ceremony for the Ladies and Gentlemen Club at Dan River Middle School.

A question was raised about the change in the date for eight grade students to visit the Career & Technical Center.

This date has not been scheduled at this time; however, it is anticipated to be moved to either January or February. **(The schedule for visits was provided after the meeting – see listing at the end of the minutes.)**

A concern was expressed about division meetings that were held recently. It was noted that the meetings were not very helpful to at least one teacher which felt the time on November 6, 2012, would have been better spent in the classroom.

November 6, 2012, was a staff development day, and meetings for staff were held in two (2) different areas of the County to accommodate all teachers. There are only two staff development days included in the school calendar (one in August and one in November). The intent on November 6, 2012, was to complete the content area meetings to include discussion and review of the new mathematics, English and science standards to ensure all teachers understand the differences, and review of the pacing guides and tests to make sure they are appropriate for

instruction. Substitutes must be secured if teachers are out of the classroom. Liaison meetings are held quarterly to provide information to the teachers. The staff wants to ensure that all teachers are aware of the resources that are available. Some teachers are using the Moodle site; but communication is definitely needed to ensure teachers have what is needed to provide instruction for the students. There are no meetings planned for the second semester. More assistance will be available as needed pending the SOL test results for the high schools.

It was noted that Union Hall Elementary School teachers did not receive notification of a change in the schedule for the November 6, 2012, meetings. Also, at the meeting these teachers attended, there was no discussion about pacing guides.

The Superintendent expressed his appreciation for the pro-active approach. He indicated that teachers can no longer work in isolation and collaboration must be prevalent. The school system is doing phenomenally well because of the teachers, staff, good strategic planning, collaboration and not allowing staff to work in isolation.

A question was raised about the purchase of iPads. Specifically, the teachers wanted to know if these were necessary, where the funds came from and who received the iPads.

Teachers were asked if they were criticized when they receive new equipment in the classroom, such as smartboards, electronic microscopes, and the latest technology to do their jobs. The teachers felt that these items were not evenly distributed. The administrators were provided a new tool (iPads) to complete their job efficiently and effectively. For all Title I schools, funding for the iPads came from Title I and the 21st Century grant. For non-Title I schools, the money non-instructional money at the school level. The principals were encouraged to purchase the iPads to "go green" and save money on paper copies. Copies are now being provided through technology that can be used on the iPad. There are many ways the administrators will use the iPad, such as the use of PowerSchool to locate a student in emergency situations, review a teacher's schedule, look up parent contact information, use the observation and evaluation tools for teachers and access IEP on-line. This technology will help to make the administrators more productive and allow more time to be in the classroom to observe teachers and instruction.

A question was raised about the replacement of the \$250,000 that has to be repaid to the County for the Comprehensive Services Act (CSA).

This money was not in the budget. However, the County withheld the reimbursement payment for CSA services of \$250,000 to the school system last year. It is anticipated that this will occur for the 2012-2013 school year as well. The money would have to come from the salary differential based on people retiring and either not being replaced or hiring an individual with less experience.

The money for the proposed employee bonus in the Spring of 2013 would also come from this salary differential.

A concern was expressed about individuals in the Central Office getting pay increases for extra duties they have been assigned because of individuals retiring. Teachers would like to receive a raise when they are asked to do more.

There were staff members at the Central Office promoted and compensated by placement on the appropriate salary schedule based on experience.

A question was raised about the availability of tuition assistance funds. Teachers whose license does not expire by June 30, 2013, feel they are being punished for wanting to complete the requirements for renewal earlier than the year of expiration.

The school budget has been cut a total of \$12.1 million over the last four (4) years. The tuition assistance funding was part of these cuts. There is \$50,000 in tuition assistance and \$20,703 in Eisenhower funding that is available for teachers to use toward tuition for college credit classes. Because of the reduction in tuition assistance funding, priorities had to be set. The first priority was to reduce the amount approved for each course from \$1,200.00 to \$500.00. The second priority was to provide assistance to provisionally licensed teachers to ensure the completion of the requirements for a renewable teaching license and the teachers whose license will expire within the next year. Teachers are still encouraged to take classes as early as possible; however, tuition assistance may not be available. There have been more denied requests this year. In the past, the tuition assistance funds have been depleted before the end of the school year. The changes in funding priorities were made in the best interest of the teachers. Currently, there is no statement on the tuition assistance form to indicate a teacher may reapply at a certain date in order to be reconsidered for approval of funding. These comments will be taken into consideration for future discussion relative to tuition assistance.

A question was raised about raises for employees.

Mr. Todd Sanders, Chairman of the Budget Committee, and Mr. Calvin Doss, School Board Chairman, have indicated that they would like to do something about raises; however, the challenge is to determine where the funding may be available. Because 2013-2014 is the second year of the biennium, the budget funding will most likely be flat. It is anticipated that there would be no cuts to the budget if everything remains as it is for the 2012-2013 school year. The Superintendent indicated that he had spoken with Delegate Danny Marshall and Delegate Donald Merricks regarding a raise. He asked that any approval for raises be granted to begin July 1 rather than January 1 which would give the full funding amount for the increase. The Governor's budget proposal should be received around the middle of December. If sequestration (fiscal cliff) is approved, there would be an impact on the school system. The following suggestions for possible cuts were provided from the Representatives:

Cut Family Life (\$100,000)

Review transportation savings by implementing a four-day school week - The Superintendent explained that the four-day school week would require the teachers to work 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. each day. Cafeteria workers and bus drivers would lose 20% of their current salary because they would work one day less. Custodians may also see a change in schedule and salary. A change to a four-day school week would have to be sold to the parents. There may be issues with child care.

Do not provide services to students who are suspended or expelled

Possibility of cutting programs that have low enrollment

Possibility of not replacing teachers/employees who retire

Review the possibility of shifting teachers to cover the schools; move teachers closer to home

Representatives were asked to talk with their colleagues and submit any additional suggestions for consideration for the 2013-2014 budget proposal.

A question was raised about consistency in evaluations for teachers.

There are seven (7) standards used by the principals when evaluating or observing teachers. Examples of observation tools have been provided to the principals.

The indicators for the seven (7) standards are not all inclusive. The principals have flexibility in the evaluation process; however, if there are discrepancies, the teachers are encouraged to discuss this with their principal.

**Mrs. Wanda Vaughan, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction,
addressed the following item:**

1. The Calendar Committee will be reviewing the 2013-2014 school calendar proposal. Any suggestions for the Calendar Committee should be submitted to Mrs. Vaughan or the Calendar Committee Representative at the school. Easter, 2014, will be the last week of April. The Calendar Committee will consider a Spring Break in March with a Friday and Monday holiday for Easter in April. It is anticipated that school will begin for students in August, 2013. There is a bill that will be addressed by the General Assembly relative to providing local divisions the option to begin school as they please. This would eliminate the need to request a waiver based on the number of days missed during the school year due to inclement weather. Unless this bill is passed, the 2013-2014 school year will be the last year that Pittsylvania County Schools would be allowed to open before Labor Day. This, of course, would also depend on the number of days missed due to inclement weather during the 2012-2013 school year. The 2013-2014 school calendar proposal will be posted after Wednesday, November 28, 2012, to receive comments and suggestions.

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

1. The Information Technology (IT) staff is in the process of testing video conferencing. It is anticipated that the January 28, 2013, meeting of the Teachers'

Advisory Council will be held through video conferencing. The Representatives would be present at the high school in their area with a camera and video screen. The meeting would be conducted over the internet rather than the Representatives coming to the Central Office for the meeting. Representatives were asked to note the location of the January 28, 2013, meeting when the agenda is provided.

2. The IT Department has purchased the latest version of MicroSoft Office for all the schools to be up to date. Also, all interested Pittsylvania County Schools' employees are being offered the opportunity to purchase MicroSoft Office Professional 2010 at a cost of \$9.95. Information will be provided to the employees on how this purchase can be completed. Any employee that may be purchasing a new computer for Christmas was encouraged to take advantage of this offer (one per employee).
3. New computers for the high schools should be arriving the first week of December with installation to follow.
4. The Safety Audits should be completed by the end of December. Appreciation was expressed to the staff for their assistance during the audits and lock down process.

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

1. The flu vaccine clinics were held at each of the four (4) middle schools. There were over 600 students, staff and community individuals served. There has been only one (1) outbreak of hand, foot and mouth disease this year. The school system is very fortunate to have a school nurse in each school and school nurse coordinators that serve the division.
2. Appreciation was expressed to the teachers for working with the special education staff to promote student success. Currently, there are multiple diplomas available for students; however, beginning in 2014, there will only be regular or advanced options.

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

1. The Salary Taskforce has discussed budget considerations to be presented to the School Board. The following priorities have been identified for further discussion at its next meeting on December 5, 2012:

- Maintain jobs, programs and benefits
- Increase employer share of insurance premiums
- Provide salary increase up to 10% for all employees
- Reconsider bus driver benefits

Consider revising the maintenance/custodian pay scales and put into two separate pay scales

If a salary increase is not possible, consider a one-time bonus with the bonus provided in a separate check and not the regular payroll check

2. The Superintendent will be putting a committee together to study the possibility of designating sick leave days to another employee. Ms. Kristal Harris, teacher at Tunstall High School, will serve on this committee. Ms. Harris has had previous experience with this type of shared sick leave program. Any change in the current sick leave policy (such as allowing days to be shared) would require the School Board's approval.
3. A flyer has been received from the BB&T Insurance Services regarding Health Care Reform. At this time, it is unknown how Health Care Reform Act will affect Pittsylvania County Schools. The school system is not looking to eliminate the insurance program at this time; however, to save money, there may be employers who will pay the penalties rather than provide health insurance, which would force the employee to find their own insurance.
4. A copy of the budget calendar for the 2013-2014 budget year was provided.

The Superintendent addressed the following items:

1. The information regarding the one-time staff compensation was reviewed. Many staff members have expressed their appreciation for the extra day off before Thanksgiving (November 21, 2012). The remaining incentives will be implemented as available.
2. The following legislative issues were discussed. Representatives were encouraged to talk with legislators to express their opinions concerning these items.
 - a. Potential legislation that indicates the school division must provide continuing education for students that are suspended or expelled. This would be an unfunded mandate and the school system would not be in favor of this legislation.
 - b. Potential legislation that indicates the school division may not suspend or expel students for disorderly conduct, disruptive or technology behaviors as stand-alone issues. The school system would not be in favor of this legislation.
 - c. Potential legislation that indicates the requirement for parental notification and due process prior to questioning students by the school administration. The school system would not be in favor of this legislation.

- d. Potential legislation that would require a State-wide grading policy that could lower standards and remove local control. The school system would not be in favor of this legislation.
- e. Potential legislation that would allow students to receive a physical education credit for JROTC. This would create procedural and organizational problems in the schools, and the school system would not be in favor of this legislation.
- f. Potential legislation that would change the continuing and probationary contract for teachers. The resolution presented by the PEA relates to this legislation. The Board will continue its discussion of this legislation and review the resolution at its December meeting.
- g. The law relative to the Social Services Child Abuse Registry states that the school system must be contacted if a teacher's name is listed or added to the Registry. The school system has requested this law to be changed to include all employees who work with the students.
- h. The Delegates believe the legislation regarding the allowance of home-school students to participate in VHSL athletics will pass. If this law is passed, the school system will request that the home-school students be counted in the system's average daily membership (ADM).
- i. Should the sequestration bill continue to be law, the first impact will be felt in July, 2013. The school system will experience an 8.2% cut in federal dollars (Title I, Title II, Title III and special education) during the first year and at least 6% for each of the following nine (9) years. If the law is not changed, compromise will need to be signed by the President to balance the budget or increase the debt ceiling.
- j. Should the legislators consider a possible raise for employees, the Superintendent also asked the Delegates to consider a percentage for the full year (beginning July 1) rather than a phantom raise that would begin on January 1.

The Superintendent asked if there were any suggestions on how to improve this meeting. There were no suggestions for improvement; however, appreciation was expressed for the chocolate.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

Pittsylvania Career and Technical Center

High School 10th Grade Tours Schedule

THS	Tuesday	Jan 15th	9:10 – 11:00 AM	Snow Date	Jan 22nd
CHS	Wednesday	Jan 16th	9:10 – 11:00 AM	Snow Date	Jan 23rd
DRHS	Thursday	Jan 17th	9:10 – 11:00 AM	Snow Date	Jan 24th
GHS	Friday	Jan 18th	9:10 – 11:00 AM	Snow Date	Jan 25th

Middle School 8th Grade Tours Schedule

TMS	Tuesday	Jan 15th	12:30 – 2:15 PM	Snow Date	Jan 22nd
CMS	Wednesday	Jan 16th	12:30 – 2:15 PM	Snow Date	Jan 23rd
DRMS	Thursday	Jan 17th	12:30 – 2:15 PM	Snow Date	Jan 24th
GMS	Friday	Jan 18th	12:30 – 2:15 PM	Snow Date	Jan 25th

Number of groups - 10 - 12