



## SUPERINTENDENT'S PERSONNEL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

October 21, 2010

Minutes

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### Present:

Eric Dragan, Paul Laurence Dunbar Middle School for Innovation; Amy Jennings, Paul Laurence Dunbar Middle School for Innovation; Terri Haley, Elementary Principals; Monica Hendricks, Dearington Elementary School for Innovation; Donna Bennett, Amelia Pride Center; Elizabeth Rinckel, Paul Munro Elementary School; Darlene Overstreet, School Nutrition; Jane Hood, Thomas C. Miller Elementary School for Innovation; Natasha Yeoman, Sheffield Elementary School; Gretchen Morgan, Linkhorne Middle School; Judy Griffin, Sandusky Elementary School; Carolyn Martin, Hutcherson Early Learning Center; Chris Smith, Perrymont Elementary School; Beth Coleman, Heritage High School; Jason Ferguson, Department of Transportation; Rachel Espinosa, Linkhorne Elementary School; Verna Lamb, Robert S. Payne Elementary School; Paul McKendrick, Superintendent; Wendie Sullivan, Recording Secretary

The Superintendent's Personnel Advisory Committee met in the Board Room at the School Administration Building beginning at 3:45 p.m. Dr. McKendrick opened the meeting by explaining the structure of the meetings and thanking everyone for their participation.

The following questions and topics were discussed during the meeting.

- 1. Why are we given six hours per month sick leave when we work seven hours every day? I understand not giving 10 days at the beginning of the year, but we were told we would accrue a sick leave day each month. Shouldn't the 10 days be divided by each month that school is in session? Please explain the reasoning behind this. I was told that the 10 days are divided in the 12-month pay period, but we don't use sick days during the summer. If a person is absent, are they docked for time beyond the six hours on that day?**

Twelve-month employees earn 7.5 hours of sick leave per month, or 90 hours per year. This leave is accrued equally over a 12-month period. Ten-month employees also accrue 7.5 hours of sick leave per month or 75 hours per year; however, due to the way the software is set up, 10-month employees accrue their leave over a 12-month period which results in 6.25 hours per month.

When 10-month employees begin work in mid-August, they have already accrued 12.5 hours of sick leave for the months of July and August.

- 2. I am extremely concerned that we do not have time during our day to have necessary meetings. Some teachers have already met six or seven times this year at 8:00 and it is too much to squeeze in. What can be done?**

Dr. McKendrick indicated that it is the building principal's decision when meetings will occur. It is difficult for principals at the elementary level to have meetings after schools because busses are arriving later. Dr. McKendrick will discuss this concern with principals at the next principals meeting and ask that they be mindful of the time used during the day; however, staff should be aware that this is a tough year. Hopefully, the school calendar and the school day will return to their original forms next school year.

- 3. Why is it that some individuals (not classroom teachers) are not required to get substitutes on days they are out, when they have some teaching responsibilities (for example – ITS personnel).**

Dr. McKendrick gave principals a directive regarding hiring substitutes for clerical staff at each school level. No other directives were given with regards to hiring substitutes. It is possible that someone in a position such as an Instructional Technology Specialist or and Instructional Reading Specialist is unable to locate a substitute with their instructional expertise.

- 4. I am wondering how it is decided which schools will be “school of choice.” Is there a way we can limit how many students each school takes on?**

Schools of choice are chosen based on the location of the school that is in improvement. School divisions must make space for students in the schools of choice, and transportation must be provided for those students until their base school is no longer in improvement status.

- 5. If a school has many classes at their limit, should students continue to be allowed to come to a school they are not zoned for due to “babysitter hardship?”**

Elementary reassignment based on babysitter hardship is the last to be considered and is only approved if there is space available.

- 6. It would be great if the extra money could be used to pay for our benefits. With no raise in many years and the economy as it is, this large cut in pay has caused major hardships.**

The Education Jobs Fund can be used for benefits and salaries. The school administration has proposed bonuses for staff to be distributed by December. Funds cannot be used for new positions or capital expenditures.

- 7. Now that the school division has found some surplus funds, can these monies be used to offset the cost of benefits now being shouldered by the employees which has resulted in a reduced pay check for everyone?**

See the answer to question six.

- 8. I would like to see the conference nights change for next year. I think it would be more beneficial for the two conference nights to be split between the semesters. Both at the MS and HS level there are semester-long classes and some students don't have any problems until the second semester. It would also be helpful if conferences were scheduled AFTER report cards went home. This could easily be scheduled in advance and put on the main calendar that's in the LCS Handbook/Calendar that all parents get at registration (plus then all the teachers would know the dates they are and could plan accordingly).**

The scheduling of conference nights is a topic of discussion each year during principals' meetings. Thoughts and concerns should be shared with building principals so that they can be provided during the principals' meeting in July.

- 9. Is it too late to add the early dismissal on the last day of the six weeks to the MS and HS schedules? Doesn't seem fair that elementary teachers get that time to finish grades, but not secondary teachers. This also gives students extra time to come in for make-up work if needed (since we lost the workday at the end of each six weeks when many secondary students would come in to do make-up work).**

It is too late to add the early dismissal day for middle schools and high schools.

- 10. When will a decision be made about the latest stimulus money? I saw in the minutes from the most recent SB mtg that they are looking at using the \$ for teacher bonuses or alleviating some of the health care costs. When will they decide for sure what to do with the money?**

See answer to question six.

- 11. I personally would like to know Dr. McKendrick's philosophy on students missing a class to finish work for another class (like we are currently doing in boot camp). When does the student make up the work in the class they missed to do other make-up work? What is this teaching our students about being responsibility? Seems like they will never do their**

**work if they know they can miss PE for a week at the end of every grading period to get everything done. Also, using other elective/exploratory classes as a reward for good work habits seems counterintuitive.**

While there is no policy that gives guidance in this area, colleagues need to work together to look at the balance of time missed from one class in order to make up time in another.

- 12. When the school board voted to allow individual incentives for student fundraising efforts, they made no mention of WHEN the incentives could take place. If we are trying so hard to protect the integrity of the school day, why are students allowed to miss an entire class period to ride in a limousine, eat pizza, or go in the “money machine?” When are these students supposed to make up the work they missed in the class during the fundraising party? Couldn’t these incentives happen before or after school and transportation be part of the incentive?**

Decisions regarding incentives for students for fundraising efforts are made collaboratively by members of the PTA and the principal at each school. Concerns regarding incentives and when they occur should be discussed with those individuals.

- 13. It would be helpful if there were consistent and unbiased ways to identify children for “advanced math” classes. This needs to start in second grade. The children need to be re-evaluated—again using objective tools, in fifth and sixth grades. There are too many children missing basic math concepts placed in advanced math. This is causing advanced math to be mislabeled class. (The conception I hear from children is you are either in advanced math or the dumb class. What about the average, on grade level children??)**

**If there were some sort of standard for this placement and the children were re-evaluated for this placement before they entered middle school:**

- 1. The classes could reflect their title;**
- 2. The truly advanced students would be able to move on and not get frustrated waiting for classmates to be re-taught;**
- 3. Children would be taught at their level and they would not become frustrated-hate math or just give up; and**
- 4. ALL children would get the instruction they need during regular school hours.**

The school administration is currently working with individuals from the University of Virginia to evaluate the school division’s math program. Discussions include training of math teachers and training for principals to

have a deeper understanding of observation and evaluation of math teachers.  
It is hopeful that plans for the program will be finalized in December.

**The next Superintendent's Personnel Advisory Committee meeting will occur on December 9, 2010, at 3:45 p.m. in the Board Room at the School Administration Building.**