



## **Teacher Advisory Committee to the Superintendent**

### **Meeting Summary Notes: September 12, 2016**

*Meeting Summary Notes are intended to serve as the superintendent's reflection on the discussions that occur during advisory committee meetings. They are not intended to be exhaustive. Instead, they are intended to serve as a general record for our on-going efforts to assess our needs, determine our goals, map out our strategies, and evaluate our policies, procedures and programs. Participants should contact the superintendent if they observe any critical oversight or misinterpretation in these notes.*

Participants present: Stacey Gibson (AHS), Tommy Crawford (MVES), Cathy Drummer (CES), Cindy Fox (CMS), Tonya Jones (CMS), Melissa Nicely (SES), Lorie Bess (Administrative Asst.), Mary Jane Mutispaugh (Director of Instruction), Jan Hobbs (Director of Assessment and Accountability), and Eugene Kotulka (Superintendent)

1. Mr. Kotulka welcomed everyone to the meeting and discussed the purpose of the Teacher Advisory Committee. He reminded participants it is helpful to send any suggestions, concerns, or questions to him ahead of time as some topics require research. He explained the committee provides valuable input and it should be considered an open forum, unless there is a specific personnel issue, which would need to be discussed privately.
2. This year's TAC meetings will take place on the following dates: September 12; October TBA, November 7, February 13, March 13; April 10, and May 3. All meetings begin at 4:00 p.m. If schools are cancelled due to inclement weather then the TAC meeting is also cancelled.
3. Mr. Kotulka gave a brief update on each of the following topics:
  - a) Revised comprehensive plan
  - b) Revised capital improvement plan
  - c) New school calendar – to accommodate students finishing their SOLs before holidays
  - d) Bank time
  - e) Vision 2020
  - f) Early College Scholarship Program - \$1,000 cost to parents. ACPS pays for books.
  - g) One-to-One Initiative
  - h) New Tech department – not fully developed yet
  - i) Turning Point program (former Alternative Education program)
  - j) Wrap around services – geared towards elementary students but will be used for any student, if needed
  - k) Connecting with Early Childhood programs
  - l) Expanded Governor's school program
  - m) Enrollment of Boys Home students – will be included in ACPS enrollment because they live in our county
  - n) Career and tech pathways
  - o) Salary increases – will be asking the Board to approve 1%, retroactive to July 1, at the Sept. 19 board meeting

- p) Technology upgrade
- q) CMS Bell system – still in progress
- r) AHS Fire Alarm system - completed

#### 4. New Business

- a) Reading initiative
  - b) Responsive Classroom initiative – sometimes referred to as “teaching good manners”
  - c) Integration of technology into the classroom
  - d) MVES new traffic pattern – changed to increase safety of students, not because of moving the Early Childhood program to MVES. This plan was in place before the move. The traffic plan was recommended by VDOT engineers.
  - e) Exit 21 interchange – work should begin in the spring. Not exactly sure how we will be affected at this point.
5. A participant reported 12 classrooms (approximately 240 students) are sharing one bathroom on the yellow/purple hall at MVES, which is not working well. Mr. Kotulka advised them to speak to the principal.
6. A participant reported it was stated at the beginning of the year that parents were no longer allowed to walk students to their classrooms; however, this is still happening and it is a safety concern. Mr. Kotulka explained it is necessary for some students to be walked to class, such as the case of school phobia or separation anxiety. However, the principal needs to be made aware of who is walking their student to class and verify there is a true need for it. Mr. Kotulka stated he knows the principal is working to resolve this issue.
7. A participant reported that the YMCA hall at MVES is given top priority for cleaning over the rest of the building and other classrooms are being skipped or not cleaned adequately. Also, there doesn't appear to be a substitute custodian when the regular custodian is on vacation. Mr. Kotulka replied he would check into this and that each room should be cleaned according to the cleaning schedule.
8. A participant reported teachers who are on cafeteria duty should be up walking around, assisting students, not sitting down. Mr. Kotulka advised this be reported to the principal.
9. A participant asked why it takes weeks for approval from central office for a professional development day, even if central office asked the teacher to attend the conference. Mr. Kotulka replied he understands this is an issue and it is being worked on the streamline the process to get approvals quicker. Mrs. Mutispaugh added teachers need to make sure their goldenrod is filled out completely, especially the transportation section, or it will be sent back, which delays the approval process even more.
10. Staff commended having the mock disaster drill, but stated they would like to have one full day to work in their classrooms before the Open House. Mr. Kotulka agreed and stated it couldn't be avoided this year because the date was picked to accommodate the other agencies involved in the drill.
11. A participant asked if a personal day is carried over from last year and none have been used for the current year, giving a total of 4 personal days, can all 4 days be taken together and can they be used in conjunction with a Monday holiday? Ms. Mutispaugh replied the policy states no more than 10% of staff can be absent on the same day and if personal leave is taken adjacent to a holiday, it requires approval by the superintendent. Mr. Kotulka replied

he would check with Fred Vaughan but he would consider approval for special events and it really is a case-by-case decision. *(Follow up: Per Mr. Vaughan, accumulated personal leave may not be used in conjunction with a holiday. See ACPS Regulation GCBD-RC.)*

12. A concern was presented about the number of teachers and administrators leaving our division and asked what is being done to improve things in our division to keep our employees. Mr. Kotulka replied he speaks with each person considering leaving to find out their reason, and for teachers it is usually a salary issue. He noted he encourages people to take advantage of opportunities that arise if they feel it is best for them and/or their family. He stated he is always working to improve the climate in the school buildings and is open to suggestions.
13. A participant presented a question about salary steps. The question stated, "If I have taught in this system for 20 years but with the lack of steps, I am being paid on a 15-year step. If someone comes to our division from another division with 20 years' experience, what step are they hired on, 15 or 20?" Mr. Kotulka replied they are paid on the 15 year step. He noted the salary scales are being worked on and it is not an easy fix.
14. A participant asked if an employee's retirement date is July 1, does that mean they have to work another full year. Mr. Kotulka replied no they do not and in fact, everyone should check with a VRS representative before retiring because he was advised that December 30 may be the best retirement date to get the most out of your plan.
15. A participant asked if maintenance could fix the water fountains at CMS as they put out warm water. Mr. Kotulka suggested they let the principal know and they can contact maintenance.
16. A participant reported students want more tacos for lunch. Mr. Kotulka stated menus are calculated based on the calories and sodium content per week. He also noted there will be a "Superintendent's Menu" one Friday per month, starting in October, so hopefully that will offer more variety.
17. A participant asked when CES will get the American Reading Company toolkit they were promised last year. Ms. Mutispaugh replied she would check into it.
18. Participants commended the colorful walls in the schools.
19. A participant noted the CMS Forum Hall needs a better sound system and Mr. Kotulka agreed and said he would check on it.
20. A participant reported there are many people listed in our email address list that are no longer employees, some have even passed away. Ms. Mutispaugh explained the technology department is in the process of "cleaning up" the list.

**NEXT MEETING: October TBA, 4:00 p.m. The meeting was originally scheduled for October 10 but will be changed due to parent/teacher conferences. You will be notified of the rescheduled date.**

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