

District Advisory Meeting: 6/17/10

In Attendance:

Fern Aefsky- Superintendent	Kim Atwell - BTA President
Dawn Condello- Principal Glenham	Steve Borrello- Principal JVF
Dawn Clemens- BHS	Lisa Biersack- South Avenue
Tom Clemens- RMS	Elizabeth Hanrahan- JVF
Donna Snowden- Glenham	

1. **Facilities Update-** District facility and building closings for contractual holidays July 2010-May 2011
 - a. July 3-5 all buildings/facilities closed
 - b. September 4-6 all buildings/facilities closed
 - c. October 9-11 all buildings/facilities closed
 - d. November 11, 24-25 all buildings/facilities closed, December 26-27- BHS open from 8am until noon for athletic team practice only
 - e. December 24-26, 31 all buildings/facilities closed
 - f. January 1-2, 16-17 all buildings/facilities closed, January 15- BHS open from 8am until noon for athletic team practice only
 - g. February 18-21 all buildings/facilities closed
 - h. April 22-24 all buildings/facilities closed
 - i. May 28-30 all buildings/facilities closed

2. **Elementary Prep-Time Update**
 - a. The district is currently unsure if they are going to be able to make any changes in terms of scheduling of prep periods for next school year
 - b. Changing elementary preps to 5 per week rather than 6 per week would be helpful in scheduling specials and would help out shared staff to have less traveling and splitting of days. It would also give specials teachers more contact time with the students. The district wants to create an 8 period schedule with 42 minute periods.
 - c. The counter proposal from the BTA was to add an additional 4 minutes per period (total of 46) to make elementary prep times equal to secondary prep times.
 - d. There has been discussion of doing a one year trial for the 5 prep schedule.
 - e. The possibility of a schedule change was discussed at the June General Membership meeting and K. Atwell has been receiving a lot of feedback from elementary teachers on the issue.
 - i. A major concern for elementary classroom teachers is having a longer block of time (a double prep) helps them to really get things done.
 - ii. A question was raised as to how the new scheduling would work on 2 hour delays in elementary. Would there be shortened periods? Currently the elementary schools start the day based on when the students get to school.
 - f. Atwell expressed her gratitude to the elementary principals for working creating mock up schedules.
 - g. Dr. Aefsky stated that this is on hold for now.

3. **Payroll-** The first pay date for the 2010-2011 school year is September 10th. Most schools received a copy of their 21 vs. 25 pay selections but the high school did not.

4. **Evaluation Process (APPR)**
 - a. Problems experienced with evaluations: some buildings received evaluations late, some teachers did not receive evaluations, some evaluations were based on discussion rather than observations
 - b. Questions
 - i. Ambiguity of due dates
 - ii. Who observes special areas such as Speech?
 - iii. Alternate assessments- need more specifics as to requirements

- iv. Are administrators and teachers fully knowledgeable of the observation/evaluation process?
- c. Feedback and suggestions for the new APPR
 - i. In South Avenue (under Ophelia) a schedule was set in the beginning of the year for all teachers regardless of whether they had tenure or not to ensure everyone knew what was expected of them
 - ii. Other elementary buildings have schedule for non tenured teachers but have not really observed tenured teachers until new APPR
 - iii. Alternate assessments:
 - 1. S. Borrollo stated that teachers who choose to complete an alternate assessment produced incredible things which will enable others to learn from what people have done. He also stated that these assessments should not just sit on a shelf and that they illustrate professional development on a diverse range of topics. He also mentioned that the alternate assessments could potentially become a departmental project.
 - 2. At South Avenue, grade level meetings were held to allow teachers to share what they completed.
 - iv. An opinion was shared that it means more (in terms of getting a true evaluation of a teacher) to stop into their room 4 times throughout the year rather than just basing a year's evaluation on one class period. It was noted that this is easier to do at the elementary rather than secondary level.
 - v. Dr. Aefsky stated the purpose of evaluations is to help a person to grow, to appreciate their hard work, and to make a person feel valued. Evaluations should not be seen as punitive. Under the new APPR everyone is getting evaluated including administrators, TA's, clerical, and teachers.
 - vi. K. Atwell made the suggestion to dedicate all or part of a Superintendent's Conference Day to reviewing the APPR in terms of expectations and implementation process. She feels that we need to talk together as administrators and teachers as to how to make evaluations meaningful.

5. Supplemental Positions for Next Year----non-coaching supplemental and coordinator positions

- a. Dr. Aefsky stated that no supplemental positions (except for coaching supplementals) will be posted until job descriptions are included.
 - i. Data has been collected by the BTA from members and the only formal job descriptions that have been found are from the 1980's. This information included who answer to who would complete evaluations for those positions as well as the number of hours and requirements involved.
 - ii. Dr. Aefsky stated that Jean Lain will be working on creating job descriptions this in July
 - iii. In the current contract there is little logic as to why positions are grouped the way that they are.
 - iv. There needs to be a systemic approach

6. South Avenue- Custodians need vacuums, need to ask the building principal to put in a request.

7. 504 and IDEA (Special Ed) Laws

- a. Teachers need to know if they have a student who has modifications
- b. 504 and IDEA are Federal and State guidelines and thus it is not an option to not offer a student their modifications. There have instances of 504 plans not being followed in RMS.
- c. 504 plans can only be altered through the 504 committee
- d. Pupil Personnel Services will ensure that each building's 504 coordinator getting the information to teachers (either electronically or in hard copy). The administration needs to make sure that teachers know which students have 504 plans; communication is very important.
- e. Teachers need to be sure that they understand students 504 modifications and thus they need to ask questions about items that they are unsure of.
- f. Parents could file a suit under the Office of Civil Rights if their child is not given their modifications. According to Dr. Aefsky, if the teacher has been made aware of the student's modifications the district will not provide legal council to teacher. All teachers of a student (including special areas) could be sued in this instance.

- g. Questions:
 - i. If the Special Education, Speech, OT, etc. is out sick and the student does not receive their services would that be considered a violation? Dr. Aefsky stated that the answer is “technically yes”.
 - ii. Is there supposed to be a specific group of people who are on each building’s 504 committee? Dr. Aefsky said that there is some latitude as to who can be part of the committee.
- h. The State is doing away with the option for students to receive an IEP diploma next year. These students will instead receive a “resume” certificate. Next year’s benchmark for graduation for classified students is 80% (this year it was 60%).
- i. Dr. Aefsky is planning on doing training next year on 504’s and IEP’s as a Superintendent’s Conference Day.

These minutes are respectfully submitted by Dawn Clemens.