

Perry Schools Discussion Notes
March 20, 2014
PTEC Room 210, 4:45PM:-5:45PM (Approximate Time)

ATTENDANCE

Administration: Bob Bohannon (PTEC), Vickie Carpenter (PTEC), Frank Giles (PTEC), Mike Bagley (PTEC), Barb Brouwer (SHS), Rhonda Jones-Jointer (PTEC), Rolland Abraham (PMHS), David Rohl (PMMS), Dave Henriott (RPE), and Danny Mendez (SES)

PEA: Neil Linville (PMHS), Kyle Hanefeld (GV) Matt Henninger (PMHS), Martha Buehner (MB), Sue Buscemi (WV), Steve Dawson (PMHS), Cathy Cullison (SHS), Leslie Preddy (PMMS), Nancy Tatum (PMA), and Diane Turpen (PMHS)

Grading expectations

At a prior discussion meeting, PEA and the administration agreed that teachers are to be expected to enter grades online once per week since parents access Skyward. Recently, parents have voiced concern because some teachers are still not meeting this expectation. Also, some parents at the elementary level have shared a concern in regards to the lacking amount of grades used in a grading period. In addition, elementary principals have put forth guidelines concerning how many grades should be recorded in each subject. For example, a student receiving only four to five grades during a nine week grading period in one subject is considered inadequate. However, requiring 27 to 34 grades per subject might be too many items. Elementary teachers are concerned that the increased amount of mandated items to be graded weekly will take more time away from and diminish other important time-consuming needs such as planning, class newsletters, cluster obligations, as well as phone calls to parents. The report card committee will be meeting soon and clarify expectations concerning the amount of grades to be reported in a grading period.

School Calendar

The Board of Education asked the calendar committee to reconvene to reexamine inclement weather make-up days. Perry Township Schools must give one week's notice prior to using a make-up day whereas before it was two weeks. The committee suggested that Martin Luther King Day and Presidents' Day be considered make-up days next year and going forward. If we have school cancelations due to inclement weather after February 16, one week before Presidents' Day, then the first four days from the first week of spring intersession would be used in the following order: Monday/Day 1, Tuesday/Day 2, Wednesday/Day 3, and, Thursday/Day 4. For example if two make-up days were needed, then Monday and Tuesday from the first week of intersession would be used. Also, the first Friday through the second Friday of intersession will not be used for inclement weather make up days. If intersession days need to be used, then intersession classes will be canceled. Any make-up days required beyond the four Intersession days will be made up by using the Teacher Record Day at the end of the school year. If additional make-up days are still required, they would be added to the end of the school year. Dr. Giles recognized that extending the school day to make up missed instructional time as allowed by the Department of Education this year, is most likely a one-time solution to a very unusual winter.

The calendar committee also recommended keeping Wednesday off before Thanksgiving in order to continue to collect its two-year attendance data. Also, one week of spring intersession will be the first week of April, which overlaps with most other school districts. These recommendations will go to the Board of Education in April.

Dress Code policy

Rhonda Jones-Jointer introduced proposed additions to Board Policy 3216 – Staff Dress and Grooming. She stated that this policy would apply to both support and certified staff. Additions include 1) have no visible facial jewelry and 2) have no visible tattoos. She explained that tattoos must be covered during contracted time, including instructional and coaching time periods. One suggestion was to cover tattoos with a Band-Aid. Facial jewelry includes any piercings visible on the face; it does not include earrings for males or females. Jones-Jointer received questions from some teachers which prompted her to reexamine the staff dress code policy. She stated that staff tattoos and facial piercings can distract from educational process. School corporation counsel has reviewed and approved the proposed changes.

PEA questioned and strongly opposed these proposed additions. Moreover, PEA team members strongly disagreed that visible staff tattoos and facial jewelry distracts from the educational process. Furthermore, the administration stated that they would further discuss our comments and concerns towards the proposed changes.

The first Board of Education reading of these additions will be held in April, and it was stated that any changes wouldn't be voted on by the Board until May.

Meeting with Master Teachers

Neil Linville recently met with the district Master Teachers, who voiced their opinion that Neil's PEA newsletter articles concerning TAP and Master Teachers unfairly leaned too far to the negative. The Master Teachers shared positive outcomes of TAP and the contributions of the Master Teachers within the district. Neil listened to the Master Teachers' perspective, apologized for imbalanced articles, and recognized their unique position because they peer evaluate. Nancy Tatum will now represent Master Teachers at monthly Discussion Meetings to provide Master Teacher perspective. Kyle Hanefeld stated that the discussion with Master Teachers was a healthy conversation and good for PEA leadership to hear.

Support Staff Money

Neil Linville asked Mike Bagley what happens to funds that are not paid to support staff due to inclement weather school closings. Mike Bagley responded that decisions were based on what was best for kids, not about saving money. How can we best get kids ready for ISTEP, ECA, and AP tests? Any remaining funds not paid in support staff pay checks remains as a cash balance in the General Fund; there is no reallocation of funds. In federally funded positions, the money may be carried over to next year. PEA voiced that adding 36 minutes to the school day is a better solution for our students than adding days to the end of the school year.

Next meeting is scheduled for April 17 at 4:45PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Turpen