

Staff Advisory Committee Meeting
April 17, 2019

QUESTIONS

Dr. Price opened the meeting with district updates and current enrollment numbers and then turned it over to Mr. Rich Sena who presented a legislative update.

1. Why is there not consistency across the district with rules regarding teachers being able to go off campus during their conference periods? Some campuses require the teacher to check out and taking care of an errand is highly discouraged while at another campus, teachers can come and go as they please without having to check out or even report that they are leaving. **(submitted 3/8/19- BMSS)**

Thank you for bringing this to our attention. All professional employees may use their conference time at their discretion. The district may not mandate a professional employee to remain on the premises during their conference period. TEC 21.404 - HR

2. Does the district have any plans on providing classrooms with a door stopper to prevent possible intruders from entering? **(submitted 3/22/19- FORES)**

Recently and on a national level, there has been debate over the use of secondary door stopping devices. There have been more reported incidents of "door stops" or similar devices being used to keep staff or police out of a classroom. Right now, we will wait for more data before choosing this option. It is now however becoming a national standard to keep all classroom doors locked while students are in the room. Remember to keep the option open to barricade the door as needed.

3. Has there been any further discussion on tuition reimbursement from the district? **(submitted 3/22/19- FORES)**

Proposed budget discussions are well underway. As stewards of the district's resources, the administration is tasked with prioritizing the needs and wants of our district. The majority of our operating budget is used to compensate employees in salary and benefits. We will continue to consider such benefits as tuition reimbursement as part of the annual budget process. - HR

4. In the spirit of becoming a front runner in education and thinking about the future and ever-evolving needs of both students and educators, I propose we make an innovative move as a district and consider piloting a system that would allow teachers to job-share. By the term job-share, I mean share the same classroom and students on abbreviated schedules. For instance, each teacher would be responsible for approximately half the teaching time/days (one teacher teaches M/W/F and the other teaches T/Th or time is split evenly 2 1/2 days each). Depending on the needs of the district/employee, the logistics of this kind of position could be flexible. Offering this kind of opportunity would allow many teachers to delay retirement and/or continue employment with the district while downsizing hours of responsibility. This is especially beneficial to those employees struggling with work/family balance. This is a win for both the employer and the employee. The district retains knowledgeable and devoted educators while educators are able to continue employment in a beloved field they might otherwise have to forgo. This allows employees to experience less stress and more work satisfaction. In turn, an increase

in motivation and positive relationships/interactions would be beneficial to all involved. Additionally, with the implementation of this position, the necessity of substitute teachers for these particular classrooms could be eliminated. If one of the employees has a sick child or doctor's appointment, rather than scheduling a sub to replace them, they could simply switch up their teaching days/schedule for the week to accommodate the change. This would save the district tons of money and eliminate unfilled jobs due to sub shortages. Finally, job-sharing would allow teachers in elementary positions, in particular, to become experts in their specific fields of study and share the load of a self-contained classroom. Would the current administration consider a position of this nature? **(submitted 3/22/19- FORES)**

Job sharing is an innovative method of staffing that allows employees the ability of professionals to work a flexible schedule or work less than full time as a certified educator. However, the staffing model does put a financial burden on a district because of TRS contribution rules and mandates regarding health benefits for our employees. We are continually looking at staffing models and trends from within education and in the corporate sector. We love the interest of our staff in all things staffing and HR! - HR

5. Is it possible to add an electronic signature to the report card so that it will send an email to the teacher? Otherwise, we do not know if the parent has seen it. **(submitted 4/12/19 - FES)**
Patti Holub has been asked to research Skyward to see if this is a possibility.
6. What is the latest on the \$5,000 raise from the state? **(submitted 4/12/19 - FES)**
HB 3 which is currently before the state legislature has not been voted upon by the senate as of today 4/15/19. The media and politician presentation of the "\$5,000" increase has been somewhat misleading. The distribution of approved monies will not actual manifest as an addition to our annual budget, but will be a reduction to our mandated recapture payment we make to the state each year and it will not equate to a set \$5,000 for designated teachers. The district administration is already considering increase scenarios for the 19-20 school year for all staff as part of the budget process and are planning to make administrative recommendation of the 19-20 compensation plan and increases for 19-20 in May. - HR
7. Will there be any training on Skyward? **(submitted 4/12/19 - FES)**
Please submit specific areas of need to Patti Holub. As the staff development calendar is planned your feedback will be considered.
8. For elementary campuses that do not have a math interventionist, is there a possibility for the district to help make sure that the part-time tutor is available sooner for intervention? It is difficult when we have students who are already struggling in the fall, but we cannot get additional help outside of the classroom until the spring. I truly believe if we were able to catch these students just a little sooner that it would make a difference. **(submitted 4/15/19- FORES)**
Staffing for tutors is at the discretion of the campus administration. There are no specific staffing dates for such positions. If an administrator deemed it appropriate and the funds are available, they may post and hire when it best serves students. - HR
9. Since the first voting of the calendar was fraudulent (multiple votes by one person), can there be a revote? **(submitted 4/12/19- KES)**
The voting process was conducted in the same way it was the previous year using Google Forms in an anonymous way. In future years, we will have only two calendars on which to vote and we

will allow only one vote per person by collecting email addresses upon logging into the survey. Another option is to construct the calendar at the district level and communicating that out to the community without input.

10. Can Central Office translate important documents that are being sent home? (That way teachers do not have to at the last minute.)**(submitted 4/12/19- KES)**

We are grateful to all staff who are able to assist in the translation of documents for our parents/guardians and students. However, we do not staff designated personnel to perform this task as part of their designated role and responsibility. In the absence of staff to translate written documents we are then tasked with having documents translated by a translation service, which limits our ability to communicate in a timely manner. There must be the prioritization of urgency of our communications, at times, and we will always make decisions on what is best for our students and their families. Dr. Stewart will work with campus principals to see what we can do to help.

11. Can you please update the Substitute list, and hire more subs for our schools? It has over 300 subs listed, but weekly we are forced to split classes among the remaining teachers. Perhaps some of these subs now have teaching positions or circumstances have changed, so our sub list is no longer accurate, and there are clearly not enough to cover our many schools.**(submitted 4/12/19- KES)**

The shortage of substitutes is an ever growing problem. When a campus is faced with a shortage it is not always because we do not have enough subs, but rather due staff not submitting absences until the day of the absence. We often receive requests for substitutes within 30 minutes of the start of the instructional day. Many efforts have been implemented to recruit and retain great substitutes for our district. For a district of our size to have 300 active substitutes in the district is a significant achievement. But it will take more than adding to the list to improve the shortages. - HR

If you know of anyone interested in subbing, please refer them to the BISD HR department.

12. Can you explain why our high schools will no longer be offering Study Hall as a class? Our high schools are academically excellent and challenging and demand a lot from our students. This extra period in a day was a great way for them to be productive and leave time in the evening for sports, jobs, and just to unwind after a stressful day.**(submitted 4/12/19- KES)**

Neither secondary principal knows anything about this concern. Study Hall is still in place.

13. With the emphasis on good attendance, would the district consider paying teachers for days accrued at retirement and / or increase the perfect attendance stipend? The stipend was once \$500 for 0 missed days. It was decreased to \$250 years ago and hasn't changed since. As a teacher who has enough days to take an entire school year off, the incentive would be greatly appreciated! **(submitted 4/12/19- KES)**

As part of the recent policy review conducted by TASB on March 19, 2019 with our administrative staff, we will be revising and making recommendations for many policies including compensation and leave policies. DE/DEC. - HR

14. Kudos for the awesome, new copy machines! **(submitted 4/12/19- KES)**

Thank you.

15. CES submitted this question for the February meeting and has sent further clarification:

In the past, campus teachers have been able to use the procurement card at conventions for items that are featured (or specials at the conventions) from approved vendors. We have been told that these purchases are now considered “impulse buys” and are not allowed. Can we get clarification about this new regulation?

Clarification Information from CES: In the past, teachers and administrators have been allowed to submit a purchase order with a dollar amount (i.e. not to exceed \$200.00) to take the procurement card to conventions. The understanding is that we will use it for approved vendors and bring back itemized receipts. I can speak from a music teacher’s perspective. I have written a purchase order for the procurement card to take to the Texas Music Educators Convention for many years. At this convention, clinicians will feature items from their sessions that are available for purchase at a discounted convention rate at vendors (approved by Boerne ISD) in the exhibit area. For example, last year, I was looking for a gong and was able to purchase one with the procurement card at the convention for a significant discount than if purchased upon return to campus. I see the validity in limiting frivolous purchases, but this year, we missed out on some “convention rates” on items that we could have purchased on site.

Could we get clarification about the possibility of submitting a purchase order for convention use if we give general list of items we will seek to purchase there? **(submitted 2/22/19- CES)**

Staff who attend conferences can request a purchase order to take the credit card to purchase items at the conference. The purchase order must list a summary of items to be purchased, ie music and instruments from **approved** vendors only.. We do not allow purchase of items such as equipment, software, or campus enhancements. Therefore a blanket “open” purchase order cannot be approved because an employee would have the authority to purchase items not allowed.

16. Also, at our January Staff Advisory, Dr. Price and Dr. Howard mentioned that the new principals for CES, FES, and BMSN would not be named until early May. Will the surveys to staff/families for principal qualities for our campuses be generated soon? Will the search and process begin in May, or will campuses know who the principals will be in May? There are a few questions about leadership for the existing campuses floating around. **(submitted 2/22/19- CES)**

Meetings have been scheduled as follows: FES April 16, CES April 17, BMSN April 18 - HR

17. Why are we spending money on another parent survey? We already did one in the fall. How much do these survey’s cost? **(submitted 4/12/19- CHS)**

In an effort to collect as much input as possible from all stakeholders, the District entered into a contract for the year with Studer Education. Surveying parents twice during the school year is part of that contract as is surveying employees. It’s important to get feedback from all stakeholders in order to continue to improve.

18. Are we no longer allowed to individually purchase an item and then be reimbursed for that purchase? (Even with a PO in place?)**(submitted 4/12/19- CHS)**

Board Policy CH requires the approval of a purchase order prior to purchase. Reimbursements happen after the purchase has occurred. All funds in the district are required to follow this policy.

19. It seems as if the process to get PO’s signed off are taking 2-3 times longer than in the past. We used to be able to get a PO done with a 24 hour turn around now I can turn in a PO on Monday and maybe it will be ready by Friday of the same week. What has happened to “local” control by school administration on these matters?**(submitted 4/12/19- CHS)**

Activity funds were centralized this year. Some purchase orders were slowed down because we had to add vendors and make budget transfers. We will continue to work on expediting orders. Administrators continue to have local control, however the business office assist to ensure compliance control.

20. It has already been asked before, but has any progress been made for paying (reimbursing) for graduate school? **(submitted 4/12/19- CHS)** Duplicate question. See response to question 3.

21. Many schools do not release rankings until the middle of Junior year. Due to high levels of anxiety and stress because of their rankings amongst our students at the high school level, is there any way we can implement this at our school? Every student that could be asked would agree with this sentiment. **(submitted 4/12/19- CHS)**

Lesla Pritchard and Dr. Stewart are creating a committee to review class rank and GPA.

22. Is it possible to limit students having a cell phone out and in use during the school day as a district-wide policy? Such as a district policy where no cell phones are out or visible by teachers during class time. Students can have their phones during lunch. **(submitted 4/12/19- CHS)** Though there are teachers who are not comfortable allowing students to have their phones out during class, there are just as many if not more teachers who are seeing devices as a tool to use during instruction rather than a hindrance. More often than not, good, solid classroom management is at the heart of providing a positive classroom environment that embraces the use of technology in the classroom. Given that technology is pervasive in the world today, it is incumbent on us as educators to teach students to use technology in powerful and effective ways rather than limiting their access to it while under our care.

23. Why has the cost of taking a school bus on a field trip gone up from \$1.50 per mile if we provide our own driver to \$2.55 per mile regardless of who drives? Can you provide a detailed explanation as to where the extra money is going and why the cost has gone up over 100%? **(submitted 4/12/19- CHS)**

Cost per mile is determined by Texas Education Agency through the districts transportation cost report. These rates are determined by the cost to operate the transportation department and the miles we traveled on the buses. Overhead cost per mile will continue to rise with personnel costs, gasoline costs, and insurance costs. Every vehicle rented from an outside source will cause the cost per mile to increase because we are not using district vehicles.

Follow Up: At the February staff advisory meeting there was a question about incentives for the retention of teachers. Members of the staff advisory committee were asked to gather feedback from their campuses to be discussed. Received and reviewed by HR. We love these great ideas! Thank you for partnering with us with the "word" on the streets about employee retention ideas!

Response from BMSS:

- Perhaps, reward employees by providing a bonus of what would be equivalent to \$100 a year but reward every five years so that people would might be enticed to stay to the five year increment marks. So, after 5 years, \$500, 10 years, \$1000 and so forth. Not sure if that's enough to keep around but it sure beats a pin!

Responses from VRES:

- I would like to see teachers be interviewed and spotlighted for what great things they have done since working in BISD. This would ideally be an interview as high up as with Dr. Price so that the teachers could also know that they are noticed even by the

superintendent of the school district. This interview and published highlight would be free (except for the time and energy to do it) and would hopefully be streamlined enough to be impactful but not just “one more thing we have to do”.

- TTESS observation/goals year(s) off. This used to happen under PDAS. When it was discussed last year during District of Innovation, Dr. Spoor said it was doable.
- I really do like the pins and hope I still get them!