

TAC Minutes October 25, 2011

The Catawba County Schools' Teacher Advisory Council met on October 25, 2011 at 3:30 p.m. in the Annex boardroom. The following members were present: Raye Lynn Weaver (Banoak), Dana Eudy (Oxford), Ellen Cline (Sherrills Ford), Pam Moody Schubert (Blackburn), Gay Austin (Balls Creek), Judy Downs (Clyde Campbell), Kim Ramsey (Murray), Mary Beth Hennessee (Claremont), Neil Bolick (Mill Creek), Judy Craft (Arndt), Heather Houston (Foard), Aleshia Abernathy (Maiden E.), Cathy Tolbert (Mt. View), Erin Roper (Lyle Creek), Natalie Burris (Tuttle), Jacalyn McGill (Catawba), Michael Shugart (Maiden High), Kathryn Pingel (St. Stephens E.), Diane Clark (Snow Creek), Stephanie Walters (Maiden Middle), Jeff Brotherton (Jacobs Fork), Lisa Koperski (Challenger), Stephanie Kelly (Startown), Pam Farnsworth (Bunker Hill), Andy Owens (St. Stephens High), Eilene Corcoran (Bandys).

Central Office administrators present were Superintendent Glenn Barger, Assistant Superintendents Pat Hensley, Beth Isenhour and Steve Demiter, Chief Technology Officer Judith Ray and Chief Finance Officer Sondra Wolfe.

Assistant Superintendent Pat Hensley started the meeting by handing out the approved 2012-2013 school calendar. This calendar was approved by the Catawba County Schools BOE on Monday, October 24, 2011. Mrs. Hensley went over and explained this calendar, in detail, with everyone present. The calendar is also available on the home page of our website www.catawbасchools.net under the heading "Approved Calendars".

The following questions were discussed:

#1 - Why do people get approved for voluntary shared leave for pregnancy? Becoming pregnant is a choice someone makes, whereas having to take off for an extended time due to illness is an unforeseen event. If this is allowed, could it be made known that the person is pregnant? Anytime I see that someone needs days, I think about the unfortunate situation that the person may be in and pray for recovery for them and their families. Pregnancy doesn't seem to fit that bill.

Answers: Assistant Superintendent Hensley responded to this question. **NO! We cannot disclose the reason the person is asking for the leave due to Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA) regulations. If the condition is covered under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), then the person is eligible for the leave. The policy is not based on condition.**

#2 - Would it be possible for central office to be open during the hours that schools are open? Maybe some staff could come in early and leave early while others come in late and stay late.

Answer: Superintendent Glenn Barger responded to the question. **The Central Office IS open during school hours and longer. We stagger arrival times, lunch times and leave times to accommodate departments. If an actual person does not answer the main number, there is a department directory available through the switchboard and should be used.**

#3- For next years calendar we need to think about having 1/2 days or early release for several days in a row for parent conferences. This could be done towards the end of the 1st quarter which will give us time to do PEP, RTI, AIG, and any other kind of conference necessary. I know change is hard, but with the way the state is adding or taking away there has to be another way. Half days will still give us the required school days needed.

Answer: Assistant Superintendent Hensley replied that the Catawba County Schools BOE approved next years calendar on Monday. She also stated that the BOE would be reluctant to approve many early release days due to parents work schedules and child care needs.

#4- What is the likelihood of moving toward year round school? Having year round school would benefit students in the following:

Loss of skills over the summer (we have many students that are regressing multiple reading levels over summer.)

AimsWeb data shows it takes a student 7+ weeks to get back to the reading/skill level they were at when they left school for summer. Our students really lose a lot during the summer months.

Answer: Superintendent Barger replied. This was done once before and worked great. There were problems with protesters such as the group "Save Our Summers", therefore it was changed back. Ultimately, the decision would have to come from the Board of Education.

#5- At Startown, we were wondering if Mr. Barger had decided what process would be used in the selection of a new principal. We remember that in the past, Dr. Markley had a committee from the school to suggest three candidates. He then took over the interview process at that point. While we understand the final choice will and should be made by the superintendent, we really would appreciate having a voice in the decision.

Answer: Superintendent Barger stated yes, the hiring of school principals would be similar to what has been done in previous years. He does plan to use a screening committee to go over all the applications, and then a committee made up of faculty, staff and community members to narrow the applications down to two or three candidates. He further stated that Startown may be a little different due to the March 1st date and may look into hiring an Interim Principal for the remainder of the school year.

The following are all questions submitted regarding payroll.

#1- I have a question that was submitted to me earlier, actually by two TAs, who have a question about the 12 month versus 10 month pay when the new law goes into effect next year. I was given two documents. The first one went home with our paychecks and states that 12 month installments will not change. The second document is an email regarding the same law, but it states that 12 month installments will not receive an August 2012 check; the first installment of the 12 will begin in the middle of Sept. 2012. This document was sent out by NCAE earlier in Oct.

Answer: Chief Finance Officer Sondra Wolfe explained. The law affects ALL ten month employees. It doesn't matter if you are paid in twelve month installments or ten; if you are a ten month employee you are affected. The decision to change the pay date has not been made. She stated that everyone should plan ahead/ plan now for August.

#2- If we get paid on the 15th of each month, how will it affect 12 month employees?

Answer: Twelve month employees will not be affected. Twelve month employee's work every day except holidays and are not prepaid.

#3- Since they don't want to pay us a full month's salary at the end of August, how about going to paying us every 2 weeks? That way teacher wouldn't have to go an entire month on less than a half month's salary. Moving payday until we have worked a full 20-21 days is going to hurt teachers greatly since most of our bills are due at the beginning of the month since that is when we traditionally have been paid.

Answer: There is the possibility of being paid every two weeks; however that is a decision the Board of Education would have to make. There are factors to consider with this including, extra cost of supplies for printing and mailing checks this frequently, plus it would required additional payroll staff.

#4- For the people in the school system that get longevity in August, will it still be paid in August?

Answer: Chief Finance Officer Sondra Wolfe replied, YES. If you normally receive your longevity in August you will still receive it in August.

The next TAC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 8, 2011 at 3:30 p.m. in the Boardroom located at the Annex.