

Discussion notes with NCTA
August 29, 2017

Those present: Scott Mills, Mark Misch, Tim Wilson, Susanne Tieman, Ginger Butcher, Rebecca Wells, Jon Baker, Kathy O'Sullivan, Jill Jones, Christina Allen

1. Suicide Prevention Training
 - a. New district policy is needed
 - b. Schools are required by law to provide at least two hours of training every 2 years to all staff

2. Background Checks
 - a. New district policy is needed.
 - b. Now required by law every 5 years for all employees
 - c. The new State law allows us to stagger the checks to include 1/5 of the staff each year over the course of the next five years and then a regular rotation of background check to stay compliant with the law.
 - d. Process for selecting the staff to have background checks: We will need to figure out our district process for selection these first five years. A random drawing is a possible method for selection, but we are open to ideas.
 - e. Who pays for the background checks: This is a negotiable item.
 - f. Scott said that both the suicide prevention policy and the background check policy will be brought back to discussions at the Sept meeting.

3. Public Complaints and Concerns – Policy 9130
 - a. Dr. Mills shared he feels some revisions are needed. He read the current policy to the committee.
 - i. Concern 1: Level 1- There may be situations where it may not be appropriate for a teaching staff member to share a complaint immediately with the complainant. Dr. Mills expressed his feeling for this team to start a discussion about this item. He doesn't need anything to be changed immediately. He asked that we think about this policy, reflect and think about examples where it would not be in the best interest of all involved. We aim to be balanced in our approach to respond to complaints.
 - ii. Questions:
 1. What is the best process?
 2. What clarity is needed?
 3. What discretion is needed?
 - iii. Dr. Mills plans to talk to his colleagues at his Study Council to get ideas for policy language..

4. Teacher Evaluations
 - a. Is there a formal and informal timeline for observations to be completed?

- b. Kristina shared that they do not feel there is a problem with the timeline for formal evaluations, but more specifically would like to have some guidelines for the unplanned observations.
 - c. Concern from some teachers brought to NCTA's attention: Some unplanned observations are happening too late in the year.
 - d. Jon asked, "What does the appeal process look like?" Dr. Mills shared that there is no appeal process written into our evaluation because it is the building administrators job to conduct the evaluation to the best of his/her ability.
 - e. Kristina shared that some teachers have expressed concern that in some situations teachers did not see their evaluation ratings at the final evaluation meeting and had some surprises when they received their final evaluation and they had no choice other than to accept the evaluation.
 - f. Dr. Mills shared that at a final evaluation meeting teachers should know what their lowest possible final evaluation score would be.
 - g. Dr. Mills shared that at their final evaluation meeting there should be a rating and that if a teacher doesn't receive a rating they should share that concern with the principal. If it still doesn't get resolved then Dr. Mills is the appropriate person to address the concern.
5. Class Size
- a. John shared the concern that in the middle and high school the class sizes are getting large.
 - b. Mr. Wilson shared that he recognizes some class sizes are getting larger, but there are many layers as to why this has happened. He shared in part the class sizes can increase because of move-ins and because of teacher prep needs.
 - c. Dr. Mills shared a spreadsheet that showed enrollment per grade level (and cohort). His spreadsheet helps him predict future enrollment numbers, but unexpected things can happen also.
 - d. This sheet is used to help make decisions about staffing needs at each school.
 - e. Dr. Mills shared that approximately 20 equals one staff member. When we go up 20, then we should consider adding staff. When we decrease by 20, we should consider reducing by one staff member. This year we added an assistant principal at the elementary level, a math teacher at the high school, a social studies teacher at the middle school and a groundskeeper. Looking at our ADM, we look to be increasing by 50 students this year.
 - f. We try to keep class sizes to 30 students or less. However, that isn't always possible. Scott shared that research on class size and learning states that class size needs to be below about 14 students for the smaller class sizes to significantly improve learning. He shared that teachers with larger class sizes should consider giving fewer grades. He shared that one grade per week is the legal standard.
 - g. Scott also shared that if NWCS added a teacher, it would go to the 4th grade at LES. He also shared that classes of 30 students are also balanced by classes of less than 20 students. In addition, if NHS needed another teacher, it would require a multi-disciplinary teacher because no one area needs one more full time teacher.

6. iPad Cases

- a. Jon stated that elementary teachers are wanting a keyboard for their iPad. Scott stated that the district purchased cases that are the same as the kids so teachers know exactly what the students have. Those iPads were not meant to be an additional tool for productivity.
- b. Scott shared that teachers have a MacBook and a desktop computer for their productivity needs.
- c. Scott also shared that if a teacher wished to use a Bluetooth keyboard with their iPad it wouldn't be a problem but the school would not provide one.

Next meeting is Sept. 26 @ 4:00 PM.