

SUPPORT STAFF ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
MARCH 9, 2010 – 8:30 A.M.
SCHOOL BOARD OFFICE

Present were:

Brenda Blevins	School Nutrition Manager, Food Service Department (E. B. Stanley)
Claudia Blevins	School Bookkeeper, Abingdon Elementary School
Peggy Crabtree	Bus Driver, Transportation Department
Kellie Frost	School Secretary, Rhea Valley Elementary School
Michelle Larson	Payroll Clerk, Finance Department
Jason Salyers	Technology Department
Robin Small	School Nurse, Abingdon Elementary School
Alan Lee	Division Superintendent
Tom Graves	Assistant Superintendent
Melissa Caudill	Director of Finance and Human Resources
Tom Williams	Manager of Transportation

Dr. Lee opened the meeting by welcoming them. He informed them that the Legislature should meet this week and approve a budget, which will have negative consequences to the school system. Washington County Schools has a plan in place to address the deficit. He asked for their input and ideas of how to keep people in their jobs. Responses were:

- She hates to see people lose their jobs. Everyone is important.
- The unknown makes it hard to determine what to do. Everyone has been conserving energy, and that has helped.
- Out of district students could be charged a fee.

Dr. Lee said that he had proposed two budget scenarios to the Board. One included eliminating middle school athletics, which would save a teaching position. When someone retires, that position is not filled unless absolutely necessary.

- They have already cut back in the cafeteria at E. B. Stanley Middle School. Subs are not called unless absolutely necessary. The cost of groceries has gone up, but meal prices have not increased.
- She does not want to see people lose their jobs, and she does not want to lose her job. She suggested a pay cut for everyone or cutting back hours worked.

Dr. Lee said that he had read an article about a four-day work week for schools, but it did not look promising. It would take 20% of bus drivers' and food service workers' pay. Also, there has never been a study on the impact on learning for a four-day work week.

- He would be willing to take a slight pay reduction in order to allow someone to keep their job. Everyone seems to be cutting back on power usage. He suggested air hand dryers in the bathrooms.

Dr. Graves responded that school bathrooms are in the process of being remodeled, and they will have automatic hand dryers.

- Automatic hand dryers would decrease plumbing problems in the bathrooms. At Abingdon Elementary, some teachers suggested the elimination of textbooks in some classes.

Dr. Lee responded that we are not buying textbooks next year. The Social Studies textbook is back up for adoption.

- She appreciates Dr. Lee's effort to save as many jobs as possible. We have made a lot of gains, and she hates to see those things go. She suggested having ink cartridges refilled as opposed to buying new ones.

Dr. Lee responded that people are encouraged to use the shared copiers. The possibility of using refilled cartridges has been explored, and they do not seem to be as reliable. We are trying to reduce usage.

Mr. Williams said he has taken out three bus routes and believes he can take one or two more. We are not doing away with jobs. It costs approximately \$2 per mile to run a bus, and we run approximately 6,000 miles per day.

- Could we purchase janitorial and office supplies in bulk?

Dr. Lee responded that we do buy in bulk and store items at the Warehouse. We are cutting back on teacher supplies and classroom supplies.

Dr. Lee asked them to tell talk about their problems or concerns. Responses were:

- Days missed due to snow have been a problem in the schools.
- The missed days due to snow have been an inconvenience, but kids eat better when it cold.
- Things are going well in payroll. It has been an adjustment after losing an employee from Human Resources. We are well on our way to utilizing Kronos to its full potential.
- He has heard of no problems in Technology. He appreciates having a lot of materials to work with.
- She has heard of no problems at Abingdon Elementary. They are getting ready for kindergarten registration and will soon be giving 5th grade immunizations. The state has made a few changes for new students coming in, and those procedures will be put in place. Flu season was early and different from last year.
- She has no complaints and is happy to have students back in school.

Dr. Lee informed them that he will propose to the School Board that June 11 be the last day of school. That is three less than the required 180 days. He will also propose that bus drivers and cafeteria workers be able to make up time for the three days of lost work if they so desire. Teachers will also need to make up their time. His proposal,

under state law, would allow us to miss as many as eight more days before we go into the following week.

He asked the group what the county needs to do better. Responses were:

- She would like to have air conditioning on her bus.
- She can think of nothing. She feels the superintendent does a good job of keeping everyone working together.
- She can think of nothing.
- Communications is important right now. Everyone is scared. She likes the e-mails sent out on the budget updates.
- He feels the superintendent does a good job.
- Communications are important, and she appreciates the e-mail updates on the house and senate budgets and the request to the School Board to extend the school year. This lets people know the issue is being addressed. Too much information can worry people prematurely.
- Bus drivers are concerned about getting a possible pay cut. They would appreciate knowing what is planned for bus drivers.

Dr. Lee complimented them on the job they do and thanked them for attending. The next meeting is scheduled for April 8.