

TEACHER ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING  
MARCH 16, 2005 – 3:45 P.M.  
SCHOOL BOARD OFFICE

Present were:

Alan Lee	Division Superintendent
Lee Brannon	Asst. to the Superintendent/Director of Personnel
Berkley Clear	Director of Academic Operations
Belinda Mullins	Supervisor of Middle Schools
Foney Mullins	Supervisor of Elementary Schools
Ronald Walls	Director of Facilities
Scott Allen	Abingdon High School
Whitney Ball	Technical School
Wendy Davis	Patrick Henry High School
Diana Johnson	Watauga Elementary School
Jane Laoo	High Point Elementary School
Ken Litton	Skill Center
Jeffrey Musick	Rhea Valley Elementary School
Kellie Persiani	Valley Institute Elementary
Joe Preston	Damascus Middle School
Erin Ruble	Wallace Middle School
Nancy Sheets	Meadowview Elementary School
Jeannie Stallard	E. B. Stanley Middle School
John Taylor	William N. Neff Center
Linda Waldron	Holston High School
Sandra Wilson	Glade Spring Middle School

Dr. Lee opened the meeting by talking about the good things happening in the county. Student enrollment is up. Parents are pleased with the education their children are receiving and have positive things to say about the school system. He asked his Parent Advisory members how they judge elementary schools, and their responses indicated the high quality of people in the building. They are pleased with their principals, teachers and staff and appreciate being able to walk in the school at any time and speak with a teacher. The School Board's goal is to hire the best teachers, and they are making concentrated efforts to increase teachers' salaries.

He told them that the Central Office is having a NASCAR Day. NASCAR is promoting a fundraiser for speedway charities, and he asked if they had an interest in doing this countywide to raise money for kids.

The Superintendent's Educational Excellence Award was discussed. He passed out a draft survey, which is a part of the award, and asked them for input on how to improve the survey.

He asked how things were going for them, how their year has been and if their expectations and hopes have been realized to improve the school or classroom. Responses were:

- Wendy Davis (Patrick Henry): They received a lot of smartboards at the first of the year, and teachers have put them to good use.
- Scott Allen (Abingdon High): Their collection of e-mails and the sending out of progress reports via e-mail has received a very positive response from parents.
- Whitney Ball (Technical School): She is a math teacher at the Technical School and has been out of teaching for twelve years. She has had a great teaching experience at the Technical School, and the staff is great.
- Erin Ruble (Wallace Middle): They are excited about the new technology. They received a TI presenter and smartboards. They also received an 8<sup>th</sup> Grade grant, and they have had fun spending money to provide things for kids. Recently they took a school trip to VMI, which was exciting for the kids. They are in a transition period with their principal.
- Jane Laoo (High Point Elementary): Technology expectations have been met. They are happy with their smartboards, carts for laptops and projectors. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade will evaluate the new mobile lab when it arrives.
- Jeffrey Musick (Rhea Valley Elementary): They are using technology. They are working hard with Reading First, and everything is directed toward reading. Reading First has provided lots of materials, and they are being utilized. A lot of tutorial programs are in progress. They work hard on student behavior.
- Ken Litton (Skill Center): They have had a good year. Companies are participating in training with them.
- Joe Preston (Damascus Middle): They have a lot of technology at Damascus. Each teacher has his/her own web page. They are anticipating the 5<sup>th</sup> graders coming in. SOL testing needs to be pushed back from the first of May.
- John Taylor (Neff Center): He feels a mentoring program for new staff would be helpful. They have several success programs at the Neff. They are building a racecar. He will pass the NASCAR info out at the Neff and get some people involved in the fundraiser. They have no problem getting money for equipment or supplies.

Dr. Lee informed them that Federal Legislature has voted to keep the Perkins Funds.

- Nancy Sheets (Meadowview Elementary): They started Reading First last year, and the teachers are now comfortable with it. They tutor an average of 100 students every afternoon for SOL. An additional full-time guidance counselor would be helpful.

- Jeannie Stallard (E. B. Stanley Middle): They received a lot of technology equipment at the beginning of the year. They need an additional wireless lab. SOL testing needs to be moved up a week.

Dr. Mullins responded that the state governs the testing schedule to a degree by requiring the test to be returned to them by a certain date.

Dr. Lee said that he would speak with Ms. Merrihue to see if something could be done.

- Diana Johnson (Watauga Elementary): The county gave them an ESL teacher and will need to consider hiring more. Teachers attended an informative conference in Roanoke on ESL.
- Kellie Persiani (Valley Institute Elementary): The 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade teachers were concerned about students reading at different levels, but this problem is working itself out.
- Linda Waldron (Holston High): They have four smartboards. Several students take AP classes. A lot of the computers at Holston are outdated, and more updated computers are needed for online testing. They would like to know if there is a technology plan for computer replacement. Staff collaboration is very good.

Dr. Clear responded that over the last three years computers have been replaced in core classes. The plan now is to replace computers in non-core areas. Principals have been asked to submit requests, and that will be done on a priority basis.

- Sandra Wilson (Glade Spring Middle): Things are going well. Teachers use wireless at Glade, and a lot use Power Point.

Dr. Lee asked them to think about the best school system or school they know and what needs to be done to bring their school up to that level. Responses were:

- Wendy Davis (Patrick Henry High): She found the Washington County School system to be far superior to its neighbors when she was working on her masters and board certifications. We have good management, leadership and a hard working staff. People were apprehensive about inclusion, but it is working well. Kids are experiencing a lot of success.
- Scott Allen (Abingdon High): He has heard the same thing. People want to know what Washington County is doing and are impressed with the school system. Inclusion is working well at Abingdon High.
- Whitney Ball (Technical School): The technical school is a great place, and the staff cares about each kid. Staff works together. They could use another resource teacher. Student morale also needs a boost. The

Technical School students feel they are perceived as the “bad” kids. They need extra, one-on-one encouragement.

- Erin Ruble (Wallace Middle): They could use some stability in administration. She enjoys her job and intends to stay at Wallace even though as a math teacher she could easily move to another school system.
- Jane Laoo (High Point Elementary): She came from another school system and feels High Point is a wonderful place to be. The atmosphere is positive and family oriented.
- Jeffrey Musick (Rhea Valley Elementary): She does not want to lose the Reading Recovery Program. It is one of the better programs for first graders. Professional development opportunities are outstanding. She feels our school system is far above other school systems.
- Ken Litton (Skill Center): Students at the Neff Center start off with a clean slate. They are able to obtain a skill and get a new start.
- Joe Preston (Damascus Middle): In the future, he would like to see us take a good look at something before we try it such as SOLAR.

Dr. Lee responded that the concept of SOLAR is good, but the support has not been.

- John Taylor (Neff Center): The Neff Center is there for the kids to help them learn a trade and leadership skills. We need to concentrate on the low achiever to enable them to take and pass the certification programs.
- Nancy Sheets (Meadowview Elementary): Respect starts at the top – teachers respecting kids and kids respecting each other, and that is the key for success. We have to be more aware of the emotional needs of our kids.
- Jeannie Stallard (E. B. Stanley Middle): E. B. Stanley has a huge staff, and they need a common meeting place to come together.