



WDEA's meeting with the Superintendent on Tuesday, September 16th, 2008 is summarized below.

CONTINUING ITEMS

♦ Corrective Action for the District

WDEA shared employee interest in further understanding the District's position related to corrective action from NCLB.

Dr. Cook explained that there are many communications in relation to WESD being in corrective action. The District, and many others in the Valley, are in corrective action largely because of the test results for both special education students and English language learners. Whenever a single school has too few students in a particular category, those results are considered collectively at the district level.

Dr. Cook also offered to have Janet Sullivan, Assistant Superintendent of Academic Services, develop a communiqué to share with employees. Since our current test scores are still embargoed until some time in October, the information will not be created until the scores are released to the public.

♦ Instructional Minutes in Self-Contained Special Education Programs

Dr. Cook shared that she had met with Dr. Carter, Director of Special Services. He is currently gathering some data to bring back for further discussion. She will talk with us about this further at a future meeting.

♦ Professional Growth Hours

Dr. Cook shared a new regulation and policy related to how professional growth can lead to salary advancement for both speech therapists and teachers. It is a revised version of a past policy that did not get transferred during the process of posting WESD's policies and regulations through the Arizona School Board's Association website. She asked the WDEA for feedback regarding the draft language.

♦ PLC Feedback

WDEA inquired about when the feedback collected throughout the school year as well as by WestGroup would be analyzed and possible modifications considered.

Dr. Cook said that WestGroup has not presented their findings yet. Once all the feedback is available, she will be preparing the final PLC report for the Governing Board. This will include possible changes, if warranted. She anticipates this going to the Governing Board in June.

NOTE: WDEA has since provided feedback regarding the language and anticipates further discussion regarding modifications that may have resulted from our input.

GENERAL ISSUES

♦ School Resource Officers

WDEA inquired about the changes to both the grant that supports the SRO program, but the reduction in the number of SROs for 2008/2009 as well as the significant increase in the SRO salary.

Dr. Cook shared that she spent much of her summer trying to resolve this issue. Across the county, grant funding for approximately 100 SROs was lost. This impacted many districts including WESD. There were several previous attempts to resolve this issue and maintain staff and services. In the end, she and her staff were able to create a one year program that would allow them to retain 5 SROs and create one safety officer position. The funding for this one year plan will come largely from the Civic Center Fund. The increase in salary is reflective of a significant increase in police salaries. It should be noted that this fund source is not available to support ongoing salary and benefits (i.e. raises).

She is pleased that the current plan does include improvements. For example, our SROs will now work five eight hour days a week as opposed to the previous four ten hour work week. This will ensure a police presence whenever students are in attendance. Another example is the availability of SROs to help at other schools in region. Part of this years plan includes contractual services with a retired police officer, Colin Pierce. His position will be to coordinate services for schools within a region that would like to access one of our SROs. In addition, as part of his position, he will seek corporate funding to expand and support the SRO program.

SCHOOL & DEPARTMENT ISSUES

♦ Spanish Translation Bank

WDEA reported that we are working in conjunction with Angela Perrone, Administrator of Translation Services, to build a bank of phrases that will be translated and available to school staff. We are updating the bank of phrases on a weekly basis based on input that we

have been receiving district-wide. WDEA further reported an interest in providing this bank as a button link on the Intranet for easy access. Ms. Perrone suggested we would have to work with MIS regarding this possibility.

Dr. Cook agreed that this would make access easier and said that she could work to implement a button.

NOTE: The button icon is currently available on the Intranet.

GENERAL

◆ **IBN: Ongoing Tasks and Working Conditions**

WDEA inquired about reconvening last year's IBN Team in order to address unresolved issues about maintaining some ongoing task forces to address working conditions as well as how those issues would provide recommendations and finalize their work.

Dr. Cook can support bringing the team back together outside of work hours. She also cautioned that some previous participants may no longer be available due to retirement or other commitments.

NOTE: The meeting is now scheduled for Monday, November 24th at 4:15. It will be held at the District Office and both members of last year's and this year's IBN Team will be invited.

WDEA asked if the new IBN Team had been fully identified. We also asked if a schedule had been established with the facilitator.

Dr. Cook reported that some positions remain vacant. She shared the schedule and said it will go out to all participants when the IBN Team is complete.

◆ **Working Conditions: Planning Time**

WDEA shared an example provided by a teacher. This example shows that given the time dedicated to preparation time and the number of individual lessons that need to be prepared, she has less than 7 minutes to plan each lesson. Each lesson may last from 10 to 45 minutes. This does not include any time allocated to duty, team planning, etc. We suggested this example could be a good education piece utilized with a variety of audiences from the Governing Board to parents.

Dr. Cook will consider the use of this example and shared that her Administrative Leadership Team is well aware of current pressures on teachers, particularly in light of an extensive reading adoption and new service delivery for our ELL population. She welcomes suggestions that could reduce burdens on teachers, even those that may be limited in duration.

◆ **Paper Consumption**

WDEA expressed concern that the new reading adoption is resulting in a significant increase in paper usage. We are concerned about the availability of paper resources at each site throughout the school year.

Dr. Cook shared that we will not run out of paper. She hopes that as staff become more familiar with the materials that they can become more selective about not only what they need, but how much. In other words, staff will be able to better differentiate their instruction and reduce copying. She is more concerned about the increase in copies that are logged on each machine.

These "clicks" impact the cost of each of our leases. This represents a greater impact on the District's budget. She will be asking schools to look at their usage. It is not the District's intent to track or restrict usage, but rather to increase awareness and create methods to reduce unnecessary copying wherever possible.

◆ **Teacher Experience Index Funding Change**

WDEA questions the significant decline in the TEI funding since only about 40% of teachers hired in 2007/2008 were actually brand new teachers.

Dr. Cook shared that Justin Wing found errors in the Department of Education's initial calculations. They considered only the hire date, not previous experience. That information has been corrected. There was a decrease, but only by about \$600,000.

◆ **PLC Time: Team/Grade Level Planning**

WDEA suggested that it would be helpful to include time for team and grade level planning within each school's overall PLC plan. One of the original purposes of PLC, surfaced by IBN, was to provide dedicated time for tasks that already need to be done.

Dr. Cook agrees that this is a legitimate use of PLC time and will remind principals to be sure to integrate such time (if they have not already done so) as they revise plans on an ongoing basis.

◆ **State Budget: K-12 Funding**

There is no doubt that a combination of the economy, reduced ADM and a deficit at the state level will impact budget decisions for 2009-2010. Everyone will have to work together to make the best possible decisions.

PENDING ISSUES

- Duty Regulation: Discuss Revised Draft
- RIF Regulation: Discuss Revised Draft
- Field Trip Policy, Regulation & Exhibits: Discussed Revised Drafts
- Hiring Procedures: Review Draft

S.E.C.

The S.E.C. is published by WDEA for the benefit of all Washington District Employees as a summary of meetings between the Superintendent and members of the WDEA Executive Committee on Solving Employee Concerns. Contact your WDEA Building Representative if you need a concern addressed.

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