

5/14/08 Labor Management Cooperative Committee

Meeting began at 8:00am.

Present: Wachholz, Gurtner, Ludeman, Lehman, Sikich, Wall, Oberbeck, Nienhuis, Probst, Nass, Weisrock, Rouse, Klug, Ecker, MacDonald, Herbst (acting as secretary)

1. Restructuring Update (Ludeman) – Wanted to make sure this was included for discussion in case there were any new updates: The teacher transfer request deadline was May 1; all K-12 student requests that came in prior to May 1 were granted; there were 2 requests for transfers by students that came in to locations where there were no special education self-contained programs so they were unable to go through. The Association will be receiving a copy of the paperwork for the teacher requests that were made, in the event that questions are raised later. Teachers were notified about their transfers one week ago Friday either from building principal, HR director, or a designee; grade level teachers were given a letter. More District-directed positions (special education, allied services) will come out as student numbers are determined & scheduling is completed. Ultimately, teaching assignments are based on the number of students enrolled; this impacts the teachers who were transferred to another building; however, it is also still dependent upon the final enrollment numbers & how it all balances out in a particular school. There were a few involuntary transfers made; the District goal is to have teachers licensed either 1-8 or 4-8 at the intermediate school; that resulted in some of the transfers that were made. People need to be aware that if you don't have a 1-8 license & you are currently placed at an intermediate school, then a transfer is possible for next year; as noted above, the District has established that goal. There are currently not enough vacancies at the high schools to absorb these people. Overall, feedback has been generally positive, even for those transfers which occurred which might not have gone the way people originally expected; most people thought of this as an opportunity for a new start or a new challenge. There are still a few people who would like to be considered for placement at another school should a particular opening occur.

2. Integrated Student Support Services Model: May update (Ludeman) – Wachholz met with the social worker representative (Sabin), the psychologist representative (Sage), & the counselor representative (Bur) about one week ago to discuss priorities. They stated that they are fully on board with the integrated services model; discussed ramifications for each of those individual strands. These representatives will also serve on future hiring committees.

3. Subcommittee Report on Issue of "Comp" Time (Wall) – This has to do with time earned, or "flex time." How this time is earned at each high school is different, & they would appreciate having that flexibility in the future; however, this could become an issue in the future depending how the school year is structured next year. Directed collaboration time would not be a time when teachers could take their flex minutes or hours; regular prep times could be a time when flex time was used.

4. Subcommittee Report on Issue of LMC Closing Dates (Lehman) – Discussions held about having the end of the year closing date the same for all elementary schools, allowing for inventory & other things to be completed; this had created an issue at some schools during previous years because it didn't allow for teacher prep time. On May 23, the recommendation will be brought forth for elementary LMCs to provide up to 2 days worth of extra pay at the

curriculum rate to complete those dates; it must be done by the end of the first week of summer vacation; it could be broken down in a variety of ways. They would have to keep track of the dates & times that they were working. This has not been an issue for the secondary LMCs; there may be further discussion about this at some point, but it is currently addresses a problem at the elementary schools. The intermediate & secondary schools do not have classes that they are responsible for teaching, which is why this is being addressed as a problem that occurs at the elementary schools only. Further discussion may need to occur regarding limited access to the LMCs; lack of accessibility during MAPs testing & other testing that is conducted in the LMCs so that formal classes are not being held has become more of a problem at all levels.

5. Revisit/Update on "All Teacher" E-Mail for Association Members (Oberbeck) – Have discussed having a new group email established just for teachers for Association updates; “all teachers” currently includes administrators. Work on this hasn’t been done, but someone is needed from the Tech Dept to set this up; Gurtner will follow up on this. The District wants to remind everyone that emails are monitored; there are staff members who have taken liberties with the system; people are accountable for the things they will be sending back & forth via this communication. The reason for the Association’s request is not to exclude information from going to administrators; it is to minimize confusion of people who are on the list & receive information but who are not members of the Association. The PR&R chairs have been on a yearlong crusade to share the information about email usage. In addition to specific state statutes there is school board policy regarding the use of emails; this would apply to attachments to newsletters or anything that might be considered political in nature.

Wachholz is concerned about the rank & file responses that come back with respect to some of the things that the District has had to deal with on an individual basis. People may not understand what “reply all” or “forward” means & the ramifications of what they are doing.

6. BLT (Nienhuis) – Elementary schools have only met a couple of times this year; BLT meetings are a way for schools to carry out the improvement plans & to be effective; that time is really needed for planning & it is valued. There needs to be a plan in place for next year. The things that were planned couldn’t be pulled off because the providers weren’t ready to go; the software became corrupt & wasn’t functioning as it was supposed to be. The District is committed to the BLTs; there is a plan in place & the decision was made not to hold meetings that may not have been as useful.

On May 23, there will be a *Think Math* vertical teaming opportunity to evaluate this year’s implementation; want to see how the program flows between grade levels. Weisrock will check further with respect to how replacement materials for consumables will be handled for next year.

7. Waiver Procedure in Light of Restructuring (Ludeman) – Only one waiver has been received by the Association so far; there was a deadline established to approve these waivers by the May Exec Board meeting; the Exec Board does not meet over the summer to address issues; will those requests will be trickling in over the summer? Gurtner has heard that principals didn’t feel they should be having these conversations when they didn’t know who their staff was going to be. Per Wachholz, Gurtner will email all principals to remind them to submit their waiver requests in order to conduct their orientations or back-to-school fests, if they wish to do so; most requests have come from elementary schools in the past.

8. Department Chair Meetings (Oberbeck) - Dept chairs have been advised that Dept chair meetings will take place after school next year; this could cause a conflict for coaches and other after-school scheduled activities; with a change in the procedure for the meetings, there appears to be a need to establish district guidelines for the new meeting time, and how the potential conflicts can be prevented. Each year when scheduling is done at the secondary school, they try to achieve balance between sections & to also maximize scheduling. Both principals have agreed that this will enhance their scheduling decisions. The issues brought forth involve people holding supplementary contracts, so it is not unreasonable to expect time outside of the school day. The expectation would be for these meetings to last for one hour. One idea would be for the contracts to be shared so that there can be a sharing of responsibility. People need to be made aware of this change so they can double team a contract or double team a coaching position; it really only impacts them 2 or 3 times per year.

9. Special Education Communication re: RTI, transfers, etc. (Ludeman) – In previous years, the entire Special Ed Department met on a monthly basis; those meetings haven't been held as regularly as before; as we continue to implement changes, that communication becomes more important than ever. The meetings are now being held quarterly; that was a request from the membership in order to be more involved in their building staff development or staff development related to their area of disability or their level. Meetings have been held with those individual areas. Another problem is that scheduling for the large group is difficult because of differing schedules. An end of the year meeting will be held next Monday. Kassulke has been trying to use email to keep people informed about housekeeping issues. There is a lot that special ed staff doesn't know; part of the concern is that people know there will be upcoming changes & they are anxious because they don't know. RTI is not a special education initiative; the steering committee has been working on this all year & will continue through the summer; the state is backing off on the RTI criteria & probably won't have it in place until July 2009. All of the data collection that is done will be actually be done by regular ed staff.

10. Criteria for Transfer (Nienhuis/Oberbeck) - Sometimes there are assumptions made about the criteria used by the District in making transfers because there seemed to be some surprises; generally, teachers are ready to move forward. There was a document developed in 1998 by the District that clarified the criteria that was considered in making transfers; it might be helpful for people to review if it is still the criteria being used by the District. With respect to transfers that recently occurred, the main things considered were licensure, the effect of the person leaving on the school he/she was leaving, & the effect of the person on the new school by bringing that person into the building; the District wanted to balance the strengths of each person as much as possible. When the District talked about those considerations, there wasn't one piece in there that was more important than the others; each of the three main pieces given equal importance. The complete list of factors that were given consideration were as follows (in no particular order):

- Willingness to volunteer for a new position
- Certifications and qualifications
- Program and staff needs at the current school of assignment
- Program and staff needs at other schools in the District

- Quality of evaluations in current position
- Current and future professional involvement and development as it pertains to the individual, and as it impacts the staffing assignment
- Personal characteristics of the staffing for a successful working relationship
- Leadership and support for the total school operation, e.g., supplemental contracts, school activities, supervision, etc.
- Amount of teaching experience in the subject of vacancy
- Previous involuntary transfers
- Seniority of affected staff members

It is important to note that these are not absolutes, since variables can and do occur.

Ultimately, the decision is based on what is best for the students in the District.

How will this work for people who had supplemental contracts? The biggest impact will be on the people from Lincoln who will not have an opportunity to continue that contract at their new school; that doesn't mean that they can't apply for supplemental contracts in that new venue; they open up frequently so there are opportunities for people. In secondary, there are many crossovers & opportunities for people to continue those opportunities. Bear in mind, supplementary contracts are nonrenewing, giving everyone an equal chance for those opportunities each year. Supplementary contracts do not necessarily have to be the same person in the building; it is desired to do that, but there may be a person who is a better fit for a particular position from a different building.

Another important thing to note is that there is a misperception that if someone has been transferred once, they will be immune from future consideration; there is an effort by the District avoid doing frequent transfers, but there are no guarantees nor is there any number identified in the contract.

11. Elementary conferences for 08-09 – The dates have not been solidified; it might be better to have this discussion at the buildings. The reason for doing this is because the calendar has been adjusted. It is recommended that a discussion take place with principals at the next Management Team meeting. For secondary, while there still may be a crunch in time, it is different; for elementary, losing that full day will be much more significant. Principals need to have a conversation with their teaching staff about this. Also need to establish a conference protocol about what the important pieces will be that need to be discussed at conferences because the times will be shorter than in the past. Elementary principals have been working on this; Vento-Bente is ultimately responsible for getting those dates on the calendar; that information will be coming out shortly.

12. Other item: Could we review how AP tests are being structured in the secondary buildings? (Probst) – LMCs have been closed for a length of time in order to conduct those tests; there are many other limitations placed on the buildings, as well. Students report it is not the best environment for them to take the tests; they have indicated that it was too loud & distracting while they were trying to concentrate. One suggestion would be to utilize some of the rooms at Parkway for AP testing to combine the students from the secondary high schools. This was done in the past; transportation liability was a significant issue. MacDonald reported hearing from both sides & that this has been debated; with growing numbers, it is difficult to accommodate these students.

Meeting concluded at 9:35am.
Minutes respectfully submitted by L. Herbst