

Labor Management Meeting
Administration Building-Board Room
October 15, 2009
4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Agenda

Present: Beyer, Koehler, Gurtner, Wachholz, Herbst, Kurovsky, Sikich, Daavetila, Klug, Gull, Nass, Neinhuis, Rouse

Contractual Issues

1. Teacher Calendar- (H1N1 potential effects/makeup days for school closings) (Kurt Wachholz): We continue to work with WA Health Dept. dating back to last spring; the Health Dept. has been a great partner with the District; each of our schools are monitoring absences for students & staff. Information sent out this fall provided staff, students, & parents with information about what to look for with H1N1. Now the CDC has said that closing schools is NOT part of the remedy & is not advocating that policy any longer. Presently, the Health Dept. has very limited vaccinations available; our students who are most medically fragile have been targeted; we have also identified those staff members who are most vulnerable because of working with those students for free vaccinations in the next week. There is a plan for in-school clinics, but the Health Dept. is going to pursue out-of-school clinics first before making a determination whether that would be needed; in-school is much more time-intensive. State Law states that when there is a pandemic situation, the Health Dept. has jurisdiction. Last spring, when two of our schools were closed, it was determined that in the law, days equated to hours & minutes & there was no makeup. Over the summer, DPI has reread that law & now has a new interpretation: schools would not have to make up the days but all Districts would have to make up the hours & minutes that fail to meet the DPI requirement per school year, if closed due to the flu.

In our District, we are going to look at our procedures & protocols in order to be able to continue to offer school at each site even with significant absences. The Association should bring forth any concerns about this to the Superintendent. For teacher absences, we would work hard to cover with subs; if there is a shortage, teachers may be asked to pick up an additional assignment which they would be paid for. However, if a teacher is needed during their instructional time & the total number of students would not exceed the contract limitations, then they may be asked to do so without compensation. It is an expectation that all teachers will plan ahead so that lesson plans are readily available. Some academic support teachers may also be asked to move into a classroom into these situations. We currently have the largest number of subs that we have ever had in the District, but if Districts begin to experience shortages they will tap into our subs. We've been experiencing about 100 students reporting ill with the flu each day since the beginning of the year. A situation could occur when a particular building may need to close, & then they would be required to make up the days. Decisions of this nature will be made on a school by school basis; it will be important for the Association to discuss this further so that all teachers are made aware. School closings would not be likely to occur based on student absences; teacher absences without enough coverage would be more likely to have that impact. We would also ask that all staff please understand that it does not send out a positive message to the community if questions are being raised with respect to conducting classes despite significant student absences. We need to carry on instruction no matter how many students are present in our classes.

Discussion about the impact of individuals who may have plans beginning immediately after the school year ends; the expectation would be that the person would have to fulfill their teaching obligation in the event that days need to be made up. Discussion about what would happen if a school closed; there would be parameters established for staff as to whether they might be needed to cover at another building. Discussion about traveling teachers; last year the Health Dept. told them that they could report to their other buildings; the same thing occurred for families with siblings at different schools. It would be unlikely that non-student contract days would be used; it does not send a good message to the community with respect to the importance of our staff development days.

Gurtner provided a list of personnel who would be the first to have the opportunity receive a flu vaccination; vaccinations are not mandated; this free offer was made to accommodate people who work with high-risk students.

2. Parent Teacher Conferences (Gurtner) – During negotiations, a statement was made that parent-teacher conferences would continue to be 3-1/2 hours; should have been a total of 7 hours in the fall & 3 ½ hours in the spring. Some schools established 8 hours of time for fall conferences. Proposed solutions: At the secondary level, could take 1 hour off of spring conferences by holding a shortened conference evening—making them 2-1/2 hours in length. Elementary could reduce the November 25 conference morning by one hour; this would have no impact on students. Further information about this issue will be sent out to us via Human Resources.
3. Teachers teaching 5 hours but 6 classes (Hale) (Sikich/Gurtner) – Some classes are taught in the same hour because they have so few people who signed up; would be the same as a combination class at the elementary level. It is not two different classes at two different times, & the expectation is to differentiate for those two groups who are in the class at the same time. The only alternative to eliminate this entirely at the secondary level would be to no longer offer those types of courses as an elective.
4. Morning prep being lost because of supervision/duties at all levels. (Sikich/Gurtner) – At two schools, teachers felt that they had lost excess prep when directed to bring the students in from outside at 8:25am so that instruction could begin at 8:30am, putting them in alignment with the rest of the District. Actually, they still have at least their minimum prep those five minutes were above and beyond the minimum. Those five minutes would be considered supervision.

Discussion about asking teachers to perform duties during collaboration time, reducing their opportunities for collaboration. Discussion about traveling teachers, who also lose opportunities for collaboration. A solution has been to reduce the expectations for their collaboration time. Discussion about requiring teachers to do certain supervision tasks, resulting in taking minutes away from their morning time while spending time completing these tasks. If the teacher has the minimum amount of dedicated prep & collaboration/preparation minutes & the required instructional minutes, then they may have additional duties or supervision assigned to them based on the remaining time. If they do have that duty or supervision, their preparation time is occurring somewhere else in the week. It would be ideal to have every teacher available for collaboration/preparation each morning and we will work towards that goal with solutions as they are created, however student supervision in the morning may be essential at times.

Discussion about IEPs being held in the morning during collaboration time; special education has been encouraged to hold these meetings during that time, as opposed to outside of the school day. It would be appropriate to note “IEP meeting” on their collaboration log.

Discussion that people feel that they are getting mixed messages about the meeting requirements. It is important to use the Communication Model at the buildings for these issues. Collaboration could occur

at an alternative time rather than the designated morning time, but everyone in that department would have to be there & the building administrator would have to be notified. While some sites delineated days for specific groups to meet to take the task of “getting everyone together” away, those meetings would only be held if there is a collaborative task to accomplish.

5. Duty/ homeroom (High School) (Kurovsky/Gurtner) – (KG)The only language in the contract that delineates duty time is specific to high school. The district maintains Homeroom is homeroom. It is not considered a duty and was not included on the duty list. Homeroom is defined by each school site within some parameters, in that it cannot be instruction involving planning, preparation and record keeping/grading. Discussion about the classification of a homeroom(CAP) at Central. A teacher committee developed how the homeroom(CAP) would be defined at Central; however, the Administration would be willing to go back to those teacher reps to define it more clearly. This is not an issue occurring at Hale as there has been no information that it was an issue at the local PR&R process; it seems unique to Central’s design. (JK)The concern has emerged because the contract provides some examples of what a duty may be. For instance in the Duties listed is Tardy/Attendance Duty (which is sitting at the front door checking late children in etc). The association suggested that if a teacher is discussing student attendance and goal setting that too is Tardy/Attendance and looks like a duty. The contract specifically states some sample duties, so this is an issue that will continue to come up when what goes on sounds like a duty. (KW) The District disagrees with this opinion; Central teachers worked collaboratively with administrators to plan for what the homeroom (CAP at Central) at their building would look like. Homeroom (CAP at Central) time was not one of those things defined under the duty piece because the contract specifically states delineates Homeroom as separate. At Hale, things were left in place as they were for this school year so that staff and administration could review the homeroom concept this year; the teachers felt comfortable with what they were already doing. (JK)The Central teacher representative claims the teachers were not presented with this model in advance; it is felt that a great number of them would be interested in reconsidering how this is set up. (KW) The administration felt that it would be disrespectful to the teacher team and administrative team at Central to continue the conversation without their input. There is currently a survey being administered at Central; a teacher committee has been and is still working on the issue as a learning project so this issue will be brought up for further discussion at the next PR&R/Labor-Management meeting on Thursday, October 22, 2009 from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
6. Intermediate School attending more than 1 meeting (Swenson/Beyer) – At WMIS, each team is responsible for turning in one log per week; everyone is expected to meet on Thursdays for staff meetings. More details are needed; it appears there is some confusion about this & further clarification is needed. We will table it until Heather Swenson the Intermediate School PR&R can be here to discuss.

Association/District Interest Issues

1. Elementary Duties/Impact (Chad Lehman/Kristen Gurtner) – There is a desire for further discussion regarding interventions. Those conversations should be held at each individual site for a while; it is recognized that we are all in the developmental stage right now and school sites are going to tweak and redesign their plans as they move forward and evaluate their impact. The Administrative Team recently shared how the intervention times were working at their buildings; a problem arises at the elementary level because of disparities in the numbers of students & resources available at the different buildings so things do not look the same and cannot look the same in every building. Is there an understanding on the part of all staff that the intervention time is an instructionally based time? That continues to be true for the most part; some buildings continue to grapple with this & support is ongoing.

Per agreement agenda items will not be added at the current meeting. New items will be put on the agenda for the following meeting when agreed upon.

Meeting adjourned at 5:29pm. Minutes respectfully submitted by L. Herbst