

**Parent Advisory Committee**  
**November 10, 2010**  
**6:30 p.m.**  
**Smithland Elementary School**

**MINUTES**

Comments:

- PAC section on website – 143 hits, minutes shared on website, look for “Ask the Superintendent” section.
- You can add to the agenda a week prior to meeting or at the meeting. Advance notice helps Dr. Kizner to investigate/research when necessary.
- Stone Spring drama programs going great.
- Smithland after-school program “BLAST off” is fantastic.
- Skyline Newcomers gathering very special.
- Drama programs in middle school – Skyline hosting competition this weekend – it’s amazing the amount of support the school system gives.
- 4<sup>th</sup> graders split up this year at Waterman were in class together 1, 2, 3 grades then split up.  
Dr. Kizner: 4<sup>th</sup> grade has become the new 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Kids shift based on skills and subjects. If skills/tracking is done wrong, kids who test poorly may really be doing well but not exposed to material needs. Work on skills...as kids improve then regroup. Decisions made between teachers and principals. No school-wide policy on this.
- Addressing class size – ranging school-wide from 16 to 23. Also varies by grade with larger numbers in some grades will possibly eventually need to shift following review of trends. Monitor enrollment closely.
- Sometimes class assignments seem random. Local foods program is great.  
Dr. Kizner: Every school is doing it, no state incentive to do this. Andrea Early has taken this initiative very seriously. Regarding assignments – talk to teachers/principals.
- Outside policies – how is the decision made?  
Dr. Kizner: 30 minutes/day physical activity. Teachers option, temperature guidelines.

- Substitute teacher policy?  
Dr. Kizner: No maximums on how much a teacher may have a substitute. Principals are on top of this – unexplained absences are looked into.
- Preschool funding at elementary schools?  
Dr. Kizner: Head Start federally funded. No governance over it, all supts. serve on the board. Funding has been decreased. Harrisonburg will lose one Head Start program. Harrisonburg, Waynesboro, Rockingham, Augusta, Bath, and Highland are all in program. Harrisonburg is the greatest consumer of the program.
- Virginia Preschool Initiative – age 4 – state always looks to reduce due to funding. Last year funding was cut. Partnership between State (50%) and locality (50%). Four-year old programs in every school (160 on waiting list). One of the first programs to cut funding.  
Dr. Kizner: Advocate for high quality teachers and education. \$350,000 for program in City of Harrisonburg. “Many children need a strong foundation before they enter kindergarten. We build a solid foundation before constructing a roof.”
- Drop off loops/parent cars concern: Thomas Harrison issues parking in loop then not getting out of loop. Stone Spring excellent program – SAFETY IS ISSUE!

### After School Programming

- Skyline/Smithland 21<sup>st</sup> Century grant - online survey, paper (respond by November 24).
- Partnership with JMU and our school system. Dr. Kizner is looking for background – will use surveys for interest and participation
- NOTE: Transportation \$70/hour
- Want to extend learning while being realistic
- Remediation opportunities
- JMU re-thinking protocol of student teacher requirement: 5-year teaching program, 5<sup>th</sup> year practicum, 5<sup>th</sup> year student teachers, may be more than just education majors. EMU and Bridgewater also may participate.
- Boys & Girls Club (has 90 in program, could take 200) and Parks & Rec (has 70 in program and that’s all they can take) have been approached.

## Pre-Calendar Discussion

Offer teachers collaboration over instructional issues. Once a month students released 2 hrs. early. Harrisonburg – islands of excellence – owe to students to align beliefs schoolwide.

Try to get calendar for upcoming years approved in March of current years.

## Division-wide Initiatives

- 6 vs. 9 weeks grading periods
- 2<sup>nd</sup> semester all kids' grades will be accessible online
- December 1 – every teacher is to have their own website
- Possibly have tech. staff come to walk us through the online grading system. Come to next meeting
- May see some staff walking around with iPads using applications (i.e., to have better communication)
- Link study to all of PAC group
- Possibly put 25 touch iPods in libraries to help with entering the 21<sup>st</sup> Century of learning
- PAC member concern – technology without clear vision is not good
- Dr. Kizner reinforced there are some really good things that can happen with this. He believes benefits outweigh risks. We will have the benefit of learning from others, schools, mistakes. Wants to start on a smaller scale and review progress and value before investing more.

## Budget Development

- Budget calendar – Dr. Kizner submits budget to school board in Jan./Feb. who then adopts at the end of March
- Jobs Bill – every school system got funding to re-call staff, support salaries/bonus, college tuition – now asking you to be cautious in how you use it
- Harrisonburg City Council/School Board have good understanding of Points of Education
- Budget development thinking may be shared more in 85% of budget/staff, 3-4% discretionary

Possibly extend school day by 7 minutes to bank time for bad weather - 990 hours not 180 days. (Believe this year's was extended already.)

**\*\*NEXT MEETING: January 12, 2011 at 6:30 p.m. at Smithland Elementary School**  
Will discuss preliminary calendar and budget information.