

Collaborative Conferencing

November 9, 2021 Minutes

Facilitator: Melissa Lindsey

1. Introduction/Check-In

Members Present: Melissa Lindsey, Chris Jerrell, Stefi Outlaw, Dr. Tanisha Taylor, Emily Clay, Dr. Kimiko Thomas, Chris Reneau, Emily Vaughn, Jeanine Johnson, Dr. Sean Impeartrice, Dr. Mary Gist, Jessica Harris and Dr. Rosalyn Evans

2. Review of Minutes for October 19, 2021: Approved with correction of two typographical errors—misspelling of a name and an unnecessary word in a sentence.

3. Scope of Conferencing:

a. Salaries or Wages

- i. Subbing during Teacher Planning—CMCEA stated that there is nothing to add at this time. CMCSS presented additional data about substitution for the months of August–October. Information about number of subs working—246 with about 70 percent working on a daily basis. For our school system size, a number closer to 400 total substitutes would be necessary to truly meet the need. Noted that the Academic Coach meeting for Friday, November 12 has been cancelled in order to better deal with expected absences. Clarified that when coverage was not 100%, the remains of the coverage was worked out by administrators in various ways like splitting classes or having coverage by teachers on planning, residents, etc. and that the specific data for how positions were covered was not necessarily available. CMCEA suggested that some buildings had used guidance counselors, librarians, and other non-classroom staff for coverage with some success, adding that might be worth establishing a protocol of going to those staff before using teacher planning to fill empty positions.

b. Working Conditions

- i. Gradebook Protocols—CMCSS reports that the focus group on the gradebook protocols will be meeting again soon. Further, it was stated that there was a clear communication problem in terms of disseminating information in a timely fashion in respect to how the gradebook would be functioning and that there will be further opportunities for feedback in the form of a short survey as well as the focus group inviting additional people at their levels to participate. Leadership team will also be meeting to discuss feedback we have already received. CMCEA suggested for consideration that the ability to return complex grading tasks such as writing or AP practice exams is exceptionally difficult to complete as grades are due quickly, particularly at that critical time at the end of the first semester. CMCSS responded that there is such feedback already available and under consideration reiterating that live gradebook to the state is rolling out in a couple of weeks and the intention is to prevent errors. CMCEA asked that perhaps the designated hours the gradebook is unlocked might be extended to be more functional.
- ii. Lesson Plan Protocols—CMCEA spoke specifically to the elementary level, asking what the expectation for submitted lesson plans might be, reporting that a kindergarten lesson plan is regularly 25-30 pages long. CMCSS responded that some guidance should be coming forward with a more consistent expectation and that there should

be variable expectations among requirements for teachers according to observed needs. CMCSS is going to provide additional guidance to administration as to the expectations for lesson planning. CMCSS observed that the level of detail should match the level of skill and included discussion of the difference between a TEAM rubric and a quality lesson, reporting the intention to clarify that difference with building administrators. CMCEA suggests that there needs to be communication about the norms across the board again, concerning the discrepancies between planning requirements and daily planning needs, pointing out that placing the level of work into providing such in-depth lesson plans does not correlate to effective execution of teaching. Discussion of due dates for plans being disconnected from reality. CMCEA asked that planning become a working document rather than a document to turn in items. CMCSS suggested that the dialogue needs to take place in a leadership team meeting at the building level. CMCEA again questioned the deadlines, etc., because planning becomes a checkbox and it feels like it serves administration rather than best instructional practices. CMCSS questioned if leadership teams are able to discuss planning/add it to their agenda, stating that it should be a building discussion and that they would like to be notified if leadership teams at the building level are not allowed to voice their concerns. Level directors are communicating with their people and CMCEA can also communicate about effective planning and district communications. CMCSS stated that best practices would be to add the discussion to a planned meeting. Further discussion of why the plans are the way they are for the non-academics in the room. CMCEA asked that it be noted that the TEAM rubric is a general education rubric, as a point of information. Also noted that there are often, at the building level, unpleasant conversations to be had if the “Wednesday” lesson plan turned in X number of days in advance isn’t happening on Wednesday. CMCEA asked that there be communication about the necessity of changing lesson plans as items need to pivot. CMCSS pointed out that the scrutiny of plans may change/alter as time as an administrator changes, also that Scope and Sequence has been pretty much in line from building from building.

- iii. Parent Communication Protocols-CMCEA stated the expectation that parent communication is a phone call and questioned whether the expectation might transition to email due to time constraints and antiquated nature of phone calls—further email records the interaction. CMCSS responded that the expectation might be a building level decision and that there is not a system-level requirement. CMCEA asked how to communicate this information to teachers who feel pressured to make a phone call. CMCSS responded that they would add it to level meetings.
- iv. Teacher Workload—Discussion of time spent outside of school hours. CMCEA pointed out the hours working outside of the school day. CMCSS responded that it’s a salaried position, not a seven-hour a day job, CMCEA questioning the appropriateness of expecting multiple hours of work outside contract hours. CMCSS response remained the same with the caveat that it probably seems worse and more stressful due to the intensity of the work as result of the COVID pandemic.