

**Classified Rep. Notes
September 17, 2019**

Melanie Kranz: Opening Comments

Called the meeting to order.

Jeanine Johnson, Chief Human Resources Officer: Introduction

Welcomed everyone to the Classified Rep. meeting.

Jeanine Johnson, Chief Human Resources Officer: Welcome New Members

Welcomed new classified representatives and introduced Erica Christmas, Human Resources Coordinator.

Jeanine Johnson, Chief Human Resources Officer: September's Question of the Month "*What went well as the district started the school year and what can the district do to improve?*" See page 6 for responses.

Mr. Millard House, Director of School: Comments

I want to thank you for the daily efforts you put out on the front line as the classified representative for your location. This group is here for a particular reason, and I want you to feel that you can openly share issues. The feedback whether good or bad helps us in creating the continuous improvement plan. This year our District grew by approximately 1,200 students, and we are currently developing a plan on how to handle the growth. I will mention a few things we are focusing on with our strategic work plan that I feel is extremely important:

- 1) Improve Student Achievement: Students social and emotional wellbeing
- 2) Maximize Employee Capacity: Teacher Pathways
- 3) Engage the Public in Support of Student Achievement: I will be going into many business and organizations to get feedback
- 4) Improve Efficiency and Effectiveness: Student Enrollment Center and looking into school capacities

I look forward to a wonderful school year.

Jeanine Johnson, Chief Human Resources Officer: Market Analysis

Each year CMCSS has an outside agency that will conduct a Market Analysis on one of our classified staff groups. The Market Analysis is conducted by using the updated job description. It is analyzed against the market to see if we are equitable on our pay scale. The 19/20 Market Analysis will be conducted on the educational and media assistants. Each position is reviewed on a five year cycle. If there is a market movement, it will go into effect July 1, 2020, pending budget approval.

Dr. Angela Huff, Chief of Staff: Enrollment Center Update

On June 10th, the CMCSS Enrollment Center opened at 430 Greenwood Ave. The Enrollment Center serves as a centralized location for parents and guardians to register their children and obtain documentation, resources, and support for the enrollment process. Parents and guardians are able to complete the pre-enrollment process at the Center, including the ability to submit important registration documents such as birth certificates, health forms, statement of residence, etc., which will be scanned and sent electronically to the school at which the child is zoned. When opening this enrollment center we worked directly with the employees who currently enroll students for input to help improve the process. We have had a few setbacks and have been working with each school on a case-by-case basis along with the Technology Department to correct the issues. We are excited about the enrollment center and all it can provide to our families.

Jeanine Johnson, Chief Human Resources Officer: Classified Staff Appreciation Day

August 21th was for the Custodial group and September 18th was for the Mechanics, Bus Drivers, and Bus Aides. Please take the time to say thank you for all they do.

Sharing a Positive Story

Richview Middle School – Richview is the best! We work with a great staff and wonderful parents.

East Montgomery Elementary School – This is our 3rd year in a row being a reward school.

Sango Elementary School – This is a student safety positive story. The fire alarm tripped and we had to evacuate the school during the pouring rain. The students and staff were completely soaked, so we sent out a message to parents informing them of the situation. Within an hour and a half, approximately 364 students were checked out through the raptor system. Had a great response from Central office from the SROs, police and fire trucks coming out to help with safety. Everything went so smoothly and people were so thankful for the effective communication.

Questions & Rumors

Question: Will the flu shot be offered at school locations again this year?

Answer: **Jeanine Johnson, Chief Human Resources Officer:** After the Benefits Fair on Tuesday September 24, 2019 flu shots will be offered at school locations. Dates and times have been coordinated with school nurses.

Question: Why are the transportation employees the only ones that are drug tested? Why aren't all faculty and staff randomly tested as they too have direct access to students?

Answer: **Jim Sumrell, Chief Operations Officer:** A random drug screen is a violation of an individual's privacy. An individual's privacy should be respected to the extent possible. Vehicle operators give up that protection in the interest of public safety. All employees are subject to reasonable suspicion drug and alcohol testing.

Jeanine Johnson, Chief Human Resources Officer: The school district has not elected to do drug screens for employees other than required DOT testing on those employees who drive our vehicles. If you do have an employee you suspect is under the influence contact your administration immediately. They will contact HR to request a reasonable suspicion drug and alcohol testing which is allowed per policy.

Click [CMCSS Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy SAF-A001](#) to view policy.

Question: Why aren't special education assistants paid more? I know our duties are part of our job description, but no one told us that in some cases we are putting our lives in jeopardy. We have been head butted, spit on, scratched, and kicked. In some cases have had to take off from work to heal. It appears to some of us that we have no recourse. It is our responsibility to protect the students at all times, but who protects us? Shouldn't we be compensated for going into battle?

Answer: **Jeanine Johnson, Chief Human Resources Officer:** All education assistant positions are under market analysis review this year. Please contact OJI if you are injured while performing your duties.

Question: Why aren't all employees in the Special Ed Department mandated to take training courses (CRT) on learning how to restrain students?"

Answer: **Dr. Sean Impeartrice, Chief Academic Officer:** The school administrator will determine who is best suited to be on the CRT team. Not every special education employee has the ability to be CRT trained and the administrator determines who is physically able and has the skills required to be on the CRT team. If you feel there needs to be more CRT trained employees at your school then speak with your administrator.

Question: I understand the main goal for the district is to get our students to school. However, there needs to be stronger disciplinary actions for students that ride the bus. For example, three (3) bus suspensions should revoke a student's ability to ride the bus for the remainder of the year. Bus drivers should not have to deal with mischievous students while maintaining the safety for everyone on the bus.

Answer: **Jim Sumrell, Chief Operations Officer:** The driver will document the incident and disciplinary action will be handled by the school administrator. Disciplinary responses are on a case-by-case situation. If a student violates 1 of 4 offenses listed in Student Conduct Discipline procedure [TRN-P013](#) they will lose their transportation privilege. If a bus driver is concerned about a safety situation or disciplinary action not being followed they need report it to their supervisor.

Question: The benefits fair is always held one day a year from 3pm – 6pm at CO. That time is only convenient to half or a small percentage of the district. There are staff who work mid-day to late night. How is this beneficial to the district as a whole? Is it possible for the benefits fair to be held on the weekend or hours like 7a-7p at a location that is larger for the sake of parking and accommodation space? It's frustrating when everyone is not included in events that are supposed to service the district and all employees.

Answer: **Jeanine Johnson, Chief Human Resources Officer:** Parking hasn't been an issues since Central South opened up. We do realize that there are some custodians and bus drivers that work during this time. We have looked at different times, but we have found that 3-6pm is most beneficial for a majority of employees, vendors and those who volunteer their time. Will never be able to have a 12 hour fair or weekend fair but will continue to look at options. Benefits is always available to answer questions. Faye Tryon 931.920.7988 or faye.tryon@cmcss.net, Amy Wigington @ 931. 920.9810 or amy.wigington@cmcss.net or Donna McIntosh @ 931.920.7929 or donna.mcintosh@cmcss.net

Question: Why are there 2 elementary parent/teacher conferences before fall break and the middle school does not have a p/t conference before fall break?

Answer: **Dr. Sean Impeartrice, Chief Academic Officer:** When CMCSS went to student lead conferences the date was moved to allow the students more time to prepare. It was done with the provision that if a student needed a parent/teacher conference, the teacher would arrange a conference with the parent.

Question: What time does the school zone lights for Northwest High School turn on and off? If a crossing guard is not present at Northwest High School performing their duties, is it lawful to drive the posted speed limit of 45? They are coming onto Lafayette from Cunningham Lane where there is a "caution school zone ahead sign", but there is no other signage to indicate when the school speed limit is in effect.

Answer: **Jim Sumrell, Chief Operations Officer:** The school zone lights operate 15 minutes before the first bell and again for 15 minutes after the last bell. When lights are flashing you must drive the posted speed limit, it doesn't matter if the crossing guard is on or off duty. The flashing lights are purchased by the city, so they are placed on the main roads. Lights have to be physically rescheduled, so they are not adjusted on ½ days or early release days.

Question: Is there a system wide phone directory available to print? Those of us out in the schools don't necessarily know who is at which location and don't always have access to look online. If we need to call downtown and the server is down, we are just out of luck.

Answer: **David Holman, Chief Technology Officer:** Online lookup is the best way to find numbers. The minute the phone directory is printed it is out of date due to employee movement. Printed phone directories also allow for spam phone calls. Principals have emergency numbers in their cell phones.

Question: Why were the high heat index routes not communicated to the schools? We knew nothing of these until a parent notified us when they were looking for their student. We understand dropping them closer to their home keeps them from walking further in the heat but aren't these actually keeping the students on the hot bus for a longer period of time? What are the temperature guidelines for implementing the High Heat route? What about drivers that have to stay on the buses longer?

Answer: **Jim Sumrell, Chief Operations Officer:** The high heat route will be implemented when the heat index is 100 ° or more. The belief is, excursion will get the human body into trouble, so not necessarily sitting in a hot environment. We communicate with principals and the transportation manager whenever the temperature reaches a 100 ° heat index to stop all outside activities and to run heat index routes. It is appreciated when ice water is provided to bus drivers by schools.

Question: What are the rules/guidelines about food deliveries to the school? On any given day the front office staff is asked to accept and sign for numerous lunch deliveries for staff. At times it can become a big distraction from our regular office duties, if you have to stop what you are doing 10 times to accept a delivery how much of my time are you costing? I know people have to eat, but it gets frustrating on busy days.

Answer: **Jeanine Johnson, Chief Human Resources Officer:** No rules/guidelines about food deliveries to schools for employees. Need to address issue with principal if there are concerns.

Question: A few years ago we were told to conserve energy within our buildings which meant no microwaves, coffee pots or refrigerators in the classrooms. Is there a written policy on that? As staff turns over they are trickling back into the classrooms.

Answer: **Jim Sumrell, Chief Operations Officer:** Temperature set points are listed in policy [OPS-A003](#). Everything else is at the principal's discretion on how to conserve energy within the school. It is ultimately a school issue on how they interpret being energy conservers. Each school has an energy champion and will have 3-4 meetings each year to discuss conserving energy.

Question: How come the custodial budget never increases? The cost of supplies go up every year but not the budget.

Answer: **Jim Sumrell, Chief Operations Officer:** The custodial budget is determined by the number of students, faculty/staff and square footage of the school. Jason Hodges has an extra budget to help out schools that need assistance towards the end of the school year. Once all the schools run out of their budget, then we will review the custodial budget.

Question: We heard that the lunch charges may get turned over to a collection company at the end of the year. Will this be decided soon? Will the parents be notified as soon as it happens? Several students are already building up big balances.

Answer: **Jim Sumrell, Chief Operations Officer:** A District level project team is being assembled to develop policy on how student debt will be handled in the future.

Mr. Millard House, Director of School: We are forming a continuous improvement committee to review this area. We have looked into collection agencies and researching other schools who have used collection agencies. If the decision is made to go with this course of action, then during the 2nd semester/4th quarter, schools will notify parents/guardians that if cafeteria balances remain unpaid by a certain date then the debt will be turned over to a collection agency.

Question: We are exploding with SpEd students. We currently have 44 with 20 more coming. (3 classes) At what point does it become necessary to add on additional aides and teachers? Is there a limit of how many you can have in a classroom due to space or square footage or body count? The regular Ed aide is being pulled from their job at least 7.5 hours a week to help provide coverage just for the 1 on 1 aide, and our Speech teacher is struggling to accommodate them with services due to the high numbers and limited time they are here during the day. These are 3 and 4 year olds that require a lot more help than traditional students. If we are short a sub and the regular Ed aide has to fill in, we are scrambling. Can we get more help?

Answer: **Dr. Sean Impeartrice, Chief Academic Officer:** The number of special education teachers and aides in a school is based on ratios and on the 20th day of school ratios are reviewed. There is a difference between the number of students on the registration list and the actual number of students in the classroom. The Special Education Department is currently looking into the ratio disparities and working on solutions.

Jeanine Johnson, Chief Human Resources Officer: More teachers, café monitors, educational assistants and other positions have been added since the school year started. There is a process in place for posting positions and focus on hiring ASAP.

Question: How many substitutes do we currently have? Are we getting more?

Answer: **Erica Christmas, Human Resources Coordinator:** CMCSS has about 415 substitutes. We are gaining/losing substitutes every week. Looking into policies and incentives to get substitutes to work more. This school year we implemented a permeant substitute design and hired 8 full-time substitutes that rotate every two weeks to a different school.

Dr. Sean Impeartrice, Chief Academic Officer: If you know of a training coming up, submit the request early for a substitute. We need to be proactive and post needs as soon as aware.

September's Question of the Month:

What went well as the district started the school year and what can the district do to improve?

Distribution of the computers went well!

Good feedback on the Convocation.

PowerSchool went bad, emergency cards and the contacts getting swapped over. Issues with parents/guardians being deleted off.

Centralized enrollment sent out student's information in pieces and took twice the time to enroll students into schools because paperwork had to be pieced together.

The idea of the central location to register students was good, however the implementation was not. The central location student registration was a disaster! We had way too many parents come in on Back to School night assuming they had been registered only to find out that their info was not in the system. We also had many complaints about the poor customer service they received while trying to register at the Greenwood location.

If the educational assistants could start a day earlier that would help start the year off much better, rather than scrambling at the last minute trying to get everything prepared for the opening.

Lack of communication still seems to be an ongoing issue between departments across the district. We had employees show up that were assigned/transferred to our building last minute and no one within our building was made aware they were coming. Last minute staff changes should have been communicated to the Principals when the employees being transferred were notified.

The Perm Sub position has been very helpful this year. I hope to see this position continue in the future.

Great Convocation and speaker. Great tech distribution.

PowerSchool problem with parents, data access and consolidation. Parents are being removed from their child, having their data access taken away, etc. the consolidation process was going well until it was taken away from us doing it. Now when it consolidates it removes their data access account.

I think the gathering at APSU was great! The guest speaker really made an impact. I think it was well coordinated and everyone seemed to enjoy it. As for improvement, it would have been nice if everyone could have arrived and gotten seated at the appointed time.

Distribution of laptops went extremely smooth.

PowerSchool issues.

A/C issues in the schools lots of super-hot classrooms.

So far the sub system seems to be running more smoothly than it did in previous years. There used to be calls from the office for coverage almost every day or at least every week. Now, so far, this hasn't been the case. It's now a rarity for coverage to be needed.