

**Classified Rep. Notes**  
**August 17, 2021**

**Jeanine Johnson, Chief Human Resources Officer:** Welcomed new representatives and introduced Chris Reneau as the new Chief Financial Officer.

**Jeanine Johnson, Chief Human Resources Officer: Question of the Month**

“What went well as the district started the school year and what can the district do to improve?”  
See page 8 for responses.

**Dr. Angela Huff, Interim Director of Schools: Comments**

Welcome back and I am glad to have you all here today. I am the Interim Director of Schools. I am very excited to be here, I have been in the district for three years so beginning year four. Before this position I was Mr. House’s Chief of Staff. I would like to share a few things with you, the first is the third day’s school count was 37,340 students and day three last year was 36,430. That gives an increase of 910 students. We knew that was going to happen and we might get more. We currently have 51 employees on COVID-19 leave and 30 of those employees tested positive. We have had 140 students that have tested positive and about 664 students that have been excluded for being a close contact. Our Onsite Clinic has vaccinated 47.7% of our staff, that doesn’t include staff that might have gone to independent pharmacies. Our Safety and Health team feel we are averaging between 50-60% of our staff that has been fully vaccinated. We have permanent subs at each of our buildings and is different from past years. If we have a situation where we many have to staff our buildings, we have created an emergency sub list of our employees that work in our Central Offices and agreed to be a sub if needed. Still highly encouraging staff and students to wear a mask when indoors. Governor Lee did issue an [executive order](#) allowing parents the option to opt out if their school or district implements a universal mask mandate. As a Senior Leadership team we meet to discuss other things we can do to mitigate the transmission of COVID-19. We will continue to discuss that list and will meet with the Communicable Disease Team. Summer learning went well. Received our TCAP data and Dr. Impeartrice’s team is working through that and deciding what we need to implement to ensure we are meeting the needs of all our students.

**Anthony Johnson, Chief Communications Officer: ESSER 3.0**

ESSER 3.0 is money provided by the government as part of the relief act. This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> round of money that school districts will receive, we have already received 1.0 and 2.0 and disbursing those over the next 3 years. ESSER 3.0 had more stipulations that were involved in this process. As a district starting in about May, we did a very robust feedback collection to include 9 different focus groups and a survey. We pushed out communication and a video about CMCSS’ plan on how the money would be spent. We collected that feedback and provided that to senior leadership so they could make adjustments based on the community feedback. Dr. Sucharski and her team are spending a lot of time putting in a final review of the plan and making sure all the boxes are checked to submit to the state who will approve that budget. If all goes well we can see that money as early as October. In the budget about 30% is focused on learning loss and 40% on building maintenance and capital projects. (Click [here](#) to view the communication and video)

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

August 18<sup>th</sup>-Custodians

### **Sharing a positive story from your school/location**

Kenwood Middle: As a newly STEM Designated school, Kenwood Middle School will have teams competing in the Cardboard Boat Regatta at Riverfest on September 11<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m. Teams are currently working on a PBL to build prototypes and full size boats; each boat will have 4 racers. This is a fantastic team building and social emotional learning project to start the school year.

Liberty: Last Friday dealing with a bus, a parent came into the school about a child and the bus was late. At 4:30pm my principal called to ask me to speak to some Spanish speaking parents about their child's bus being late. Then I read the newsletter about the power of WE and talks about empathy. This interaction was the power of WE in action.

Adult High School: Been going fantastic at the Adult High School, we have about 50 students enrolled. Have some working on the enrollment process and once all enrolled that will give use about 75 students. Have 2 sets of daughters/mothers enrolled.

Adult High School: They have done an awesome job on enrollment and making classrooms that were nothing into something that is inviting. They have made that side of the building look amazing.

### **Questions and Rumors**

**Question** If I have some comp time hours accrued can my Principal force me to take a day off to use them rather than let me use them on a day of my choosing later in the school year?

**Answer** **Jeanine Johnson, Chief Human Resources Officer:** Supervisors/Principals can require use of comp time based on the best time for the school/department. As a part of ESSER 3.0 there is an item that will pay classified employees for accrued comp time up to July 1, 2021.

**Question** With the price of custodial supplies increasing this year will we get an increase in funding to compensate?

**Answers** **Chris Reneau, Chief Financial Officer:** Short answer yes. We increase the budget in anticipation of the increase of custodial supplies. In fact we increased it by 49.4%. On the other side we are pushing back, a lot of our vendors are trying to push price increase on us and looking at quoting. We are trying to partner with the county as well, to see if they are getting better pricing.  
**Norm Brumblay, Chief Operations Officer:** One other thing we are going to talk about when we get to budget season is the formula as well that the custodial accounts are funded. There are a lot of variables number of students, square footage of the building but that other variables that impact that we will look at.

**Question** If the admin assistants and other (non-bus driver) transportation staff are pulled to drive a bus during shortages, have you considered doing this with the teacher and certified long term sub shortages? Perhaps the staff from the Instructional Teams at Central Services South could cover classrooms and open teaching positions until they are filled? This would put "certified" staff in those openings and as a bonus-give them a realistic experience of what is going on inside the schools these days.

- Answers** **Jeanine Johnson, Chief Human Resources Officer:** We do have an emergency substitute list. We have a list of employees that are not assigned to a school but work in a variety of different positions that will be able to go out to the schools working as a sub to prevent school from closing due to staffing shortages.
- Dr. Sean Impeartrice, Chief Academic Officer:** All the level directors and myself have meet with Melissa Izatt and came up with different scenarios to help with the open certified positions. Some of those are using positions like the academic coaches a couple days a week in a classroom. We searched for education assistants that have 4 year degrees, instead of making an EA salary they will be making a teacher's salary and have the ability to get their certification. We have looked at Austin Peay student teachers that are in their second 6-week placement in the fall, we could job-embedded some of them for the open position.
- Question** If a teacher is asked to ride a bus as a behavior helper why do they get paid \$20 an hour when a bus driver is only paid \$16.27? Isn't that sort of unfair for the bus drivers to say we are not worth that same amount since we have the training and CDL license?
- Answer** **Jeanine Johnson, Chief Human Resources Officer:** The rate was developed several years ago in comparisons with other positions that teachers get paid for like tutoring.
- Question** I understand there are 2 classified reps in the transportation dept. We never receive any communication about meetings or minutes from meetings. Can someone follow up to make sure they are aware and understand they need to send this out to all Classifieds in their department? We would like to be in the loop and present questions at times as well.
- Answer** **Jeanine Johnson, Chief Human Resources Officer:** Melanie Kranz has been sending out the minutes to all the non-school personnel to include transportation department. She is in a new position and the non-school personnel department representatives will now be sending out the minutes. If in the future you don't receive the minutes please reach out to your department representative for the minutes.
- Question** Teacher residents are being moved to classrooms to teach where there is no teacher hired. I feel like we are not ready and are being thrown in without proper experience or enough training. I want to help where I can but I also want to learn all I am supposed to before being turned out. What are they going to do if they don't find enough teachers to hire soon?
- Answer** **Dr. Sean Impeartrice, Chief Academic Officer:** We had criteria about selecting the teacher residents going into the classroom as a teacher this year. We are not putting teacher residents in that position if they don't meet that criteria. Not saying that if they are short a sub one day and a teacher resident helps out but not on continual basis. If a resident feels like they are not ready they need to reach out to their principal or to [TRP@cmcss.net](mailto:TRP@cmcss.net) (comes to me and the pipeline facilitators).
- Question** Do teacher residents get substitutes?
- Answer** **Erica Christmas, Classified Employees and Substitutes Coordinator:** Yes, they do get subs.

**Question** Communication from the district to parents that are in the enrollment process or that pre-registered over the summer. Until a student is housed in a building, parents receive no communication. This means they don't get vital information about things like transportation and laptop registration.

**Answer** **Dr. Angela Huff, Interim Director of Schools:** Typically, until student is in PowerSchool parent will not receive messages. Once they have completed their pre-enrollment with the Enrollment Center, they are emailed about being new to the system. We also have district notifications on our social media and district website that parents can go to for information. Communications also sends information out to all the news outlets.

**Question** If a parent enrolls a student online, doesn't use the enrollment center, does it tell them to go to the school and bring the birth certificate, shot records?

**Answer** **Dr. Angela Huff, Interim Director of Schools:** Yes, they are emailed with what items are missing and know what they need to gather in order to complete their enrollment.

**Question** There needs to be better information released to schools about K-12 Virtual and its processes for transfers. Also, can registrars be included in the email for students that are returning to buildings from virtual?

**Answer** **Dr. Sean Impeartrice, Chief Academic Officer:** Virtual is now a school of choice which means it follows the open enrollment period from mid-January to mid-February. Only exception is a new student to the district and there is space, they didn't have that option during open enrollment up to the first day of school, or a special request that goes through Erin Hedrick with a doctor's note that the family is immune deficient. If the student was successful and there is room, we also look at their siblings and if it would work for them too. We don't like to admit just one person in a family but the whole family. We built that schools on the numbers that signed up between January and February. So it isn't like a brick and mortar school, we aren't going to add teachers. A student enrolled in Virtual School up until the beginning of school could decide instead to go traditional. Erin Hedrick has been emailing principals to let them know this student is going back to their zoned school. Asked her that in the email to ask the principal is there anyone else like a registrar who needs to know about this change.

**Question** The numbers for COVID continue to rise and as essential workers we are putting our family and our lives in jeopardy each day we come to serve our students. Especially since there is no mask mandate in place. My questions is, why do we have to use our sick leave if our COVID leave is exhausted? It should be renewed each year until the numbers decrease significantly.

**Answer** **Jeanine Johnson, Chief Human Resources Officer:** The COVID-19 leave was a Federal requirement that ended December 31, 2020. We as a district did extend employees using the 10 leave days reduced by an FFCRA leave used for qualifying reasons ([HUM-A094](#)). We didn't budget additional sick leave.

**Question** It's been told that we will not go remote. So, will we just keep coming in on matter how high the numbers get and wait on another shelter-in-place? What is the district planning on doing to protect their employees?

**Answers** **Dr. Angela Huff, Interim Director of Schools:** The state of Tennessee has taken away our ability to go remote and we don't have that as an option this year. The only options we have is in person or our virtual school. As I mentioned earlier in my opening comments is we as a staff have been looking at additional mitigations that we can implement within our schools to lessen the transmission of COVID. That is what we are looking at because that is what we have the authority to do. We don't have the authority to do remote. We can put a mask mandate in place, but with the Governor's executive order parents can opt out of the mandate. In Montgomery County, 87,199 (41.7%) of citizens have been vaccinated and 51.4% age 12 & up have been vaccinated.

**Dr. Sean Impeartrice, Chief Academic Officer:** One thing we can do is if we have the ability to be vaccinated then be vaccinated. We do track school data as far as staffing and students go, if we had to close a school because we felt health and safety wise we need to close it we would do that.

**Anthony Johnson, Chief Communications Officer:** The community spread we have right now is .657%, we experienced that the end of December of last year and got out of it the end of last January. I think we need to remember that time period. When we were at that point on December 14<sup>th</sup> we have almost 6% of our employees out on leave and almost double the positives in the community than we do now with the same amount of community spread. There are some personal choices you can make. Ultimately, there is not one specific measure, outside of the vaccine that has been promoted most effective, that is better than the others. It is like Swiss cheese model, each mitigation strategy has a little bit of a hole in it so you have to do lots of little things. As a district there are 8-9 different things right now that you may or may not know that we are doing from our HVAC unit and poster encouraging the handwashing. At this point we are doing things to protect our employees, students and community.

**Question** I have noticed in other locations throughout the district, there are coffee makers, mini fridges, diffusers, fans, etc. that are plugged in – in individuals offices, but my department I was told I cannot have any of this stuff plugged in due to a power management plan from the operations department. Why are we enforcing this in one department but not enforcing it anywhere else? Is there an actual power management plan in place and are we going to continue only enforcing it in select departments, or are we going to hold the entire district to one standard?

**Answer** **Norm Brumblay, Chief Operations Officer:** The energy conservation is covered under [OPS-A014](#). Each building/schools sets goals and each building/school has an energy representative to monitor the goals.

**Question** Why do we have to add our munis # on the sign in forms saying we completed a plan course? Everyone is able to see our number and I am concern about confidentiality.

**Answers** **Jeanine Johnson, Chief Human Resources Officer:** Tina Smith, Director of Professional Learning, sign in sheets generated for PLAN courses do not contain Munis numbers. There is a generic sign in sheet sometimes used in place of the normal PLAN generated sign in sheet. [PRD-F039](#). It does contain the Munis number due to illegible handwriting and differences in names (e.g., same name, nickname, etc.) The generic sign in sheet is most commonly used with large group compliance trainings when accurate attendance records are imperative.

**David Holman, Chief Technology Officer:** Although I would not hand out my employee ID, we only use it as an identifier. Access to the time clock, access to pay stub (but you would need access to email first), sign in to Raptor (but they should be checking badges), access to change a password (but you would also need additional information).

**Question** Why is there not anyone who is bilingual at transportation to answer questions that some of our parents have.(I have suggested this before and have also volunteered to help out but upper management has not made a decision)

**Answer** **Norm Brumblay, Chief Operations Officer:** We used to have someone that was fluent in Spanish and they retired a few years ago. As you have heard we don't even have enough English speaks to answer the phones because most of our office staff is out driving buses. I am not aware of any arrangements for translator volunteers, however I would be more than willing to discuss. We do have access to Language Line and Google Translate.

**Question** Why is there not a dedicated line for schools only? Transportation questions from staff in an emergency or a dedicate phone line for office staff and principals (we need a direct line with a direct person who knows what they are doing).

**Answer** **Norm Brumblay, Chief Operations Officer:** At this time all available office personal are out driving buses. Right now we are short 100 drivers and that is 1/3 of our force, so anyone that can drive a bus is out driving. In an emergency all principals have an emergency phone numbers they can call that were issued by the district.

**Question** The custodians were told to purchase more trash cans for the cafeteria and kitchen. We don't mind doing our part but would like some clarification on what items the Child Nutrition department is responsible for and what items the school is responsible for. Who can help with that?

**Answer** **Norm Brumblay, Chief Operations Officer:** Traditionally, Child Nutrition purchase the small trash cans and bags that they have by sinks. The large trash cans that are used around the schools are purchase by the schools. Custodians can purchase large trash cans through the custodial budget, if you have any further questions reach out to Steven Dellinger, Custodial Assistant Manager, [steven.dellinger@cmcss.net](mailto:steven.dellinger@cmcss.net).

**Question** Do we know when they will start to catch up with the Technology work orders? Several people have put in work orders quite a while ago and have not gotten them done yet.

**Answer** **David Holman, Chief Technology Officer:** Last year we closed 45,000 work orders with 27 techs. 25% of those work orders came to us in the first 8-week window starting the day teachers returned. During that 8 weeks we take the entire department to 14 schools over a one week window to deliver 17,000 computers. We are in the middle of that delivery time. All we ask is a little patience at this time of year. We staff for the normal part of the year so that we do not waste taxpayers resources.

**Question** Our bus drivers came into the front office and said they were told that the schools would have cold bottled water to give them. Are we supposed to be getting water brought in from somewhere? This was the first we heard of it.

**Answer** **Norm Brumblay, Chief Operations Officer:** The drivers that do go to the operations complex: West Creek, Liberty, Montgomery Central and Operations do have bottle water available. Most schools will have coolers out with water for not just the bus drivers but others doing out door duty. It isn't anything that has been required, just offered.



## Question of the Month

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

- The Transportation issue with confirming the buses caused a nightmare. Parents were so confused and angry. Rather than parents “opt” in, to ride the bus why don’t we have them OPT out instead? It would be better to over prepare than under prepare for riders. Also the school personnel were not aware of this whole change, it would have been nice if this had been communicated to the office people so that they knew what to tell parents.
- Enrollment issues:  
So many parents assumed once they enrolled online that their student was “enrolled” and they failed to bring the supporting documents into the school. Obviously, parents do not read all of the screen when enrolling. Is there some way that an automated message (PHONE AND EMAIL) could go out once the online registration is submitted saying something like Welcome to CMCSS we see you registered on line –please remember to bring your documents to the school- your student will NOT be placed in a class until documents are received OR placed on a bus until \_\_\_\_\_ steps are completed?
- Everyone has been very great in welcoming me to the team here. My only concern was having one day of training before the first day of school with the students. I would have liked to have felt more prepared, and had the educational assistant training beforehand. However, the staff has been great in answering any questions I’ve had so far.
- All the staff is very nice and super helpful with my questions but as a new hire I sort of felt slightly unprepared on the first half day to be in a classroom. Although that will get easier once school actually starts and after we complete all the training opportunities. I think the first half day went surpassingly well with all the students in the building. I’m very excited to have this opportunity and work for CH. Hoping for a great 21-22 school year.
- Having the BOY meetings in person was great, and very informational. Being allowed to accept military immunizations not on TN form was also helpful.
- Finding out that parents needed to use the zoning tool, and the contact us feature if they were new to the district and needed bus transportation, days before we opened was stressful and confusing. We still have parents that have requested a bus stop and still do not have one. Or any info from transportation going forward. When we email transportation we get replies that parents need to handle it, when we call transportation it rings and goes to a full voicemail box. When we tell parents to contact transportation they get frustrated with us.
- We need clarity from transportation concerning the bus situation. Some of the Transportation staff are saying students can ride the bus to and from school while others are saying if a student is not signed up to ride a bus they cannot ride the bus home.
- Bus stops are not loaded in transportation which is making it difficult for the schools to give bus information to parents.
- Transportation was a nightmare. Communication that went out about bus riders went out as a “Survey” instead of registration. In this day and age, why aren’t we implementing software that connects transportation with the schools so as soon as a child is registered a bus and stop is assigned from the routers? Why was pencil and paper used?
- All zoom class meetings were live and went as planned. Students seemed excited to be back.
- Ability to spend time at school preparing for classes as opposed to taking courses and spending time in in-service meetings.
- Facility/family/student communication went well.



- Improvement: Host a couple of days/evenings prior to school starting as registration “open houses” to eliminate a majority of the first day of school surprise registrations.
- Something done well- information availability.
- Something to improve on- parents/legal guardians understanding of the importance of “updated” information.
- Information availability is something the district does very well at the district level and by school. The issue tends to be the information in PowerSchool being updated by parents/legal guardians.
- Updating emergency cards sooner and assuring that parents/legal guardians understand all that means. Telephone numbers, emails accounts, addresses, who can pick up your student, etc. This can be updated quickly and in real time by calling the front office of any school and when it is time for an information release (or emergency), it is vital! We should assure your parents/guardians have an understanding of how to update because many complaints are filed under “no one ever told me” or “I never get any information” and when asked about what is listed in PowerSchool as contact info, it’s often not correct or not marked as “primary” for the family.
- Administrative enrollment software was really user friendly.
- The buses and not the lack of bus drivers but the parent survey that went out. Many parents were not able to fill out the survey and many didn’t know about the email. Communication in the email made it seem optional and not a requirement. Also, why not send out the communication earlier.
- Communication with the front desk about what is going out to parents.
- Front office unable to enter student bus numbers in PowerSchool. We aren’t able to run a bus roster for the bus drivers.
- Extra days before school begins for nurses to allow time to add students doctor notes, orders and forms. Allow the time for nurses to work with doctors and families to get a plan to ensure all safety measures are in place and staff trained to handle student before school begins. Handle the assessments for the students. Would be very beneficial to the nurses and students to allow the nurses more time to prepare for the school year for the safety of the students.
- Ensure employees that need communications receive them.