

## **Classified Rep. Notes January 18, 2022**

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

“What additional resources or supports are necessary for implementing expanded academic offerings?”  
See page 7 for responses.

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

Happy New Year! The Director’s search is ongoing, January 25<sup>th</sup> we are having our community hearings to get feedback from our community on what requests you have for a director. Along with what challenges and issues are facing our district and Director of Schools. Will remain with same timeline I mentioned before. Candidates will be selected in April with interviews conducted between late April and May. Contract offered in early May and assume position July 1st. The county commission did approve a resolution for Kirkwood High School on January 10<sup>th</sup>. Very excited about that for our high school students. January 17<sup>th</sup> was our first zoning opportunity for stakeholders to provide feedback on proposed zoning recommendation. On February 8<sup>th</sup> Norm Brumblay and his zoning committee will make a recommendation to the board and the board will decided what they would like to do with that zoning recommendation. Kirkwood middle school is slated to open this upcoming August and Kirkwood high school the following August.

### **Christopher Reneau, Chief Financial Officer: ESSER 3.0 Update**

We did get conditionally approved mid-December. We got preliminary approval from the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) regarding our application and what we were requesting to spend the money on for ESSER 3.0. There were some things in there that TDOE said that we are not going to allow that to be an ESSER 3.0 expense. In this whole process there are two divisions that as a school district we have to work with the TDOE and Comptroller’s Office, which is the fiscal management for the state of Tennessee. TDOE says yes you can spend your money on this then the fiscal side says no, we don’t have items in the right accounts or budget amount. We have to go through this whole process to ensure we have the approval to spend the funds and have the correct account codes. We have submitted revisions and changes to our plans to the state and waiting for approval. Around 90% of the changes are to match the fiscal obligations for the Comptroller’s Office. Some of the capital investments we wanted to make the state said we couldn’t use the money to do those projects. Federal money is very specific. For example, if they gave me a million dollars to buy pencils that is all I can buy with those funds. I have to collect the money into a certain account and then spend it out of a certain account. Ninety-five percent of our plan has been approved, it is just making sure we are 100% in compliance. Hoping to have approval soon, so we can start allocating and spending money.

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

As soon as we get everything finalized we will communicate that with you. What we do have is 15% of the budget is allocated for employee bonuses and 20% in employee compensation. The state did have some thresholds, like 30% had to address learning loss and that is still there. The rest is a good chunk of the capital investments. We hope to be able to send out communication soon once everything has been finalized and approved.

### **Jeanine Johnson, Chief Human Resources Officer: ESSER 3.0 Update**

It is good to also know that we are required to spend the money first and then receive reimbursement. This may require staggering of implementation.

### **Dr. Sean Impeartrice, Chief Academic Officer: Portfolio of Academic Offerings**

See [2022-23 Application Period for Schools & Programs of Choice](#) for CMCSS Academic Offerings.

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

January 19<sup>th</sup>- SROs, Substitutes, Warehouse and Book Processing

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

WCHS: We have a sub that graduated from WCHS in 2018. She has been covering a long term position and is just doing fabulous.

Adult High School: We had 27 adult graduates during the 1<sup>st</sup> semester.

NPMS: We recently had a security check around our one of our portable classrooms. The teacher called the SRO and reported the suspicious individuals. Right after that I walked across the street to get lunch at the gas station and the employees even said how we did a great job in keeping our kids safe.

KMS: Kenwood Middle is proud to have Ms. Paula Hendrick recognized as teacher of the year.

**Questions and Concerns**

**Question 1.** Is there any way to have these classified rep meetings at a different time in the morning/late afternoon? Many educational assistants help in the cafeteria during lunches and it leaves them short.

**Answer** **Jeanine Johnson, Chief Human Resources Officer:** We have discussed this before. We have gone with the lunch time, since most will be available during that time. A survey will be sent requesting feedback.

**Question 2.** Can attendance automatically add the 5 day parent note if a student is absent for 5 days instead of waiting for the parent to turn one in?

**Answer** **Dr. Angela Huff, Chief of Staff:** No, you can't and this is a part of the if/when sheet that student services sent out awhile ago. If that occurs you need to contact the parent and let them know a 5-day letter is being generated and ask if there is a medical note. If there is not, than the parent can use one of their parent notes for that day.

**Question 3.** Why we cannot have soap dispensers that actually work? Or what it would take to relieve the issues of them being full but rarely actually working.

**Answer** **Norm Brumblay, Chief Operations Officer:** You can have soap dispensers that actually work. If a soap dispenser is causing issues, you need to speak with the lead custodian. The lead custodian can collect the defective soap dispenser and exchange them with the vending company. If this is a constant issue the lead custodian needs to reach out to our custodial supervisor and let them know about the situation. So they can address it with the vending company.

**Question 4.** With Virtual school moving to Central Services South, are there any plans to fix the parking lot? The back of the building is in really bad shape. The large potholes are rough on vehicles and a tripping hazard for pedestrians. Also, it would really be helpful if the parking spaces were painted so the area could be maximized and utilized to the fullest.

**Answer** **Norm Brumblay, Chief Operations Officer:** The first part of that question, the virtual school buildout is funded through ESSER. The parking lot had to be cut from that project, because it didn't meet the strict definitions in ESSER. However we are exploring different options. One is a joint project with Montgomery County government for potential expanding warehouse operations, on another side of the property. We continue to look at ways to use our regular capital funds to improve the parking lot. CMCSS maintains over 85 acres of asphalt.

- Question 5.** When we are short 2 or more custodians why can we not get floaters to help out? We are exhausted and cannot maintain the entire school properly.
- Answer** **Norm Brumblay, Chief Operations Officer:** At this time we have two float custodians for the entire district. Those two float custodians are trying to cover 38 schools and 5 support buildings. Currently we have multiple schools that are short custodians. Staff and coverage is a challenge for every department. Each day we determine the most critical locations and send the floats to that location for the day. If it is just a shortage there are other options that are offered. Like overtime and other custodians come from other buildings.
- Question 6.** Why aren't those of us working out in the schools ever asked to rate/evaluate our supervisors in our respective departments at Central Office? Such as custodians, SpEd teachers/aides, bookkeepers, and nurses? We do these on the Principals and Asst. Principals but why not the others? It could provide some valuable feedback.
- Answer** **Jeanine Johnson, Chief Human Resources Officer:** That has not been the practice at Central Office-Gracey to do the 360 Feedback. It is something that will be at the discretion of the new director of schools because they evaluate these employees.
- Question 7.** Why let people transfer if it leaves us short staffed? These positions should be filled before they move to new location.
- Answer** **Jeanine Johnson, Chief Human Resources Officer:** Transferring is an opportunity for employees. We do if it is a classified position is notify the principal/supervisor and post that position for 5 days and after two weeks have the employee transfer. For a lot of employees this can be a promotion and making a higher pay rate or working more hours. We don't like it to go beyond two weeks and sometimes it might depending on the situation. Typically with teaching positions transfers don't happen during the middle of the year unless it is a unique situation.
- Question 8.** Does CMCSS have a contingency plan in place in the event a school is destroyed by a tornado? The question meant to ask how the district will deal with the students as far as where they would go for classes and staff. And the destruction of the school would not involve any students or staff.
- Answer** **Norm Brumblay, Chief Operations Officer:** The district does have relocation contingency plans. The plans include utilizing other resources/facilities to ensure all students continue to learn.
- Question 9.** When may the students use the drinking fountains again?
- Answer** **Jeanine Johnson, Chief Human Resources Officer:** Recommendations from the Health Department are to keep the water fountains off. We have two grants that have been applied for to provide water filling stations at every school. The goal is to have the water filling stations installed over summer 2022.
- Question 10.** With the rising rate of weapons being found in school, is there anything being done to secure more/different security for our school busses? At the moment we are low on drivers and monitors which isn't helping, is there anything more being done to grow the amount of these employees?
- Answers** **Norm Brumblay, Chief Operations Officer:** Recent media attention has focused on weapons found inside schools. Law enforcement statistics indicate that there really has not been a rise in weapon related cases. In 2019, there were 11 weapon charges (knives, firearms, bb guns, airsoft guns, Tasers) and this includes on and off our campuses with a majority are parents with 1 gun being found inside the schools. In 20/21, there were 4 charges and law enforcement says that was a COVID year. In 21/22 there were 14 charges and 2 inside the schools. Felt better when seeing the data, not a rise just hearing about it

more. We do have some things in place to include expanded bus monitor program, enhanced camera system, panic feature on radio that sends signal to transportation/district offices, and real time tracking on all the buses. We have annual safety training where we talk about these types of situations with our drivers. Just installed bus radios inside the security operation center that is monitored by SROs and law enforcement. Then 911 also has a new enhanced system.

HR is doing more recruitment efforts to recruit more bus drivers. Looking at statistics it shows we need to work more on employee retention. During the 2018/19 school year we lost 7 more drivers than we hired. Mid-year for the 21/22 school year we have lost 50 more drivers than we have hired. Working with Chris Reneau, Chief Financial Officer, has allowed us to do some retention efforts. One incentive is the bus driver recognition program you will see about 180 buses with a placard on it. The placard tells you who that driver is and the achievements of that driver. We have a teacher monitor program to assist the bus driver with maintaining discipline on that bus. Have supplemental opportunities for drivers to earn additional income in other trades. Have a bus driver bonus for recruitment and had 14 take advantage of this since October. We have stipend for extra routes, this has been the most successful and appreciated thing we have done this year. The stipend pays \$10 for any extra route a driver completes beyond the driver's assigned route. Have performance bonuses up to \$600. Also have a market analysis for the bus drivers and hoping that has a positive effect.

**Erica Christmas, Classified Employees and Substitutes Coordinator:** Something that is helpful in growing our drivers is we just started a pilot program for bus drivers that have moved to other positions. The employee will drive a bus route in the morning/afternoon and be paid at the bus driver rate of pay, then work their new positions. Many bus drivers have moved on to other positions but will pick up a little more work to help.

**Question 11.** Could we get updated local phone number list on General Resource Page? It has not been updated since 2019.

**Answer** **David Holman, Chief Technology Officer:** Had to do some research on them, we didn't realize they still existed on the website. We created a live data portion ([employee directory](#)) where you enter the employee's name and it brings up their current information. We are working on a report option that will pull the data for all schools and locations.

**Question 12.** Can the district look into hiring one or two bathroom monitors for each school? It would greatly help all of the schools. It would also help our Related Arts teachers to not have to monitor bathrooms during school lunches and to not have students in the front office using adult bathrooms all throughout the day.

**Answer** **Dr. Sean Impeartrice, Chief Academic Officer:** Great time to bring this up with budget time. With the rise in bathroom vandalism will look into it.

**Question 13.** Can we have the school nurse test staff members with covid symptoms to cut down on absences? It would be a much quicker way to have staff return to work vs having to make an appointment.

**Answer** **Jeanine Johnson, Chief Human Resources Officer:** We are not having our nurses do COVID-19 testing. If you have our insurance you will be receiving an email about getting home test from pharmacy. The government is offering free at-home COVID-19 tests (link to website to order: [COVIDtests.gov - Free at-home COVID-19 tests](https://www.covidtests.gov)). If you put in for COVID leave you must still provide a medical provider's positive result. You need to enter you leave in the portal as soon as you test positive, even if you are waiting on the medical provider's positive result.

- Question 14.** When will the market analysis results be provided? Will we have actual access to the results as requested previously from the nurses?
- Answer** **Jeanine Johnson, Chief Human Resources Officer:** We are still working on summary of results. Information was provided a few days before Christmas break. First step will be to review with SLT as budget is prepared for 22/23. If approved by the board will then go to the county for approval. Once it is approved by the board will send out letters to employees with market movement, estimate this will occur in May.
- Question 15.** We need more admin. Assistants and EA's to help support our school.
- Answers** **Chris Reneau, Chief Financial Officer:** Last year's budget we increase by 22%. We have spent more this year than last year. If there is an additional need for more educational assistants, then that needs to be discussed.
- Erica Christmas, Classified Employees and Substitutes Coordinator:** Educational assistants are our largest vacancy group right now. We have over 100 approved applications in the pool. The turnover happens at a higher right. Would like more information about this question. Is this a shortage due to vacant positions or full positions and needing to additional help?
- Question 16.** What will happen to all of the people that have been hired with the ESSER funds once those funds run out? Will they be able to bump people out of other positions if they have more seniority if their ESSER job ends or will those jobs be made permanent? How many jobs have been created with the ESSER funding?
- Answers** **Jeanine Johnson, Chief Human Resources Officer:** When posting new positions the job descriptions will state ESSER funded and when people accept those positions they do with the understanding that position is funded with a grant. ESSER positions will end when the funds end. We may have growth that year and they can move into other positions. Might be able to work into permeant positions in the general funds. Will not bump others out of jobs. Teachers do have tenure status, so if they do take an ESSER funded position and that position ends they would go into another teaching position.
- Anthony Johnson, Chief Communications Officer:** We are hiring 120 employees with ESSER 3.0 funding.
- Question 17.** Teachers are no longer wanting to stay for the late bus duty with extra pay. If classified staff are willing to stay but would normally clock out 30 minutes before regular dismissal would they be able to get paid for that 30 minutes or only for the time that the bus is actually late?
- Answer** **Jeanine Johnson, Chief Human Resources Officer:** If your scheduled shift ends at 2:30pm, you will clock-out and then clock-in when you are needed to cover for late buses. We are not going to pay someone to wait to do a job. Send Erica Christmas, [Erica.christmas@cmcss.net](mailto:Erica.christmas@cmcss.net), if your school is having any issues with this to talk with the principal at that school.
- Question 18.** How come Onsite is not offering antibody testing?
- Answer** **Jeanine Johnson, Chief Human Resources Officer:** Antibody testing is a facet of COVID that Onsite is not going to explore at this time. Antibody testing has not been deemed necessary as a means to mitigate COVID. We would never desire to add additional unnecessary lab costs that would provide almost no value to our treating Providers.
- Question 19.** Can Teacher Residents stay after their regular day for late bus duty? Admin thinks at some point they were told we couldn't keep them past their regular day but if they are being compensated for late bus duty is that allowed?
- Answer** **Dr. Sean Impeartrice, Chief Academic Officer:** Three factors in play first, what program are they in? Second, they are paid a 7-hour day. Third, they are in an intense program. We

have discourage giving teacher residents after school duties due to the intensity of the programs. Teacher Pathways mentors will schedule meetings with residents afterschool.

**Question 20.** It was stated in a previous classified meeting that comp time would be paid out pending the budget approval when funding was passed... what is the status on this? Will our comp time be getting paid out this school year?

**Answer** **Chris Reneau, Chief Financial Officer:** We have provisional approval for comp time accrued up to July 1<sup>st</sup> of 2021. In the process of getting final approval from TDOE and Comptroller. Then working on a plan to pay out. We do plan on paying out this year.

### **Question of the Month**

What additional resources or supports are necessary for implementing expanded academic offerings?

- Training. Having qualified, quality staff members. Special education needs to be expanded. "Regular" classroom teachers need training on how to manage behaviors in children with disabilities.
- After school medically trained staff for emergency situations
- Additional adults
- We need more businesses and industries to partner with the district to train students to be ready for the workforce in a larger variety of career choices.
- Transportation provided to student who wish to go to a school for their academy they are not zoned for. Also, transportation provided for courses offered at a TCAT campus.