

The only question I have and I don't know if it applies to this committee. I had a teacher who wants me to ask if there is any way we can get in ballgames free if we teach in the county.

I asked this question to a variety of principals and got a variety of answers. Some schools allow employees to enter extra-curricular free of charge. Some send free tickets to the school of the team they are playing for the employees. Some reminded me that the gate is used to fund the costs of sports. I would suggest that this be brought to CCEA as a negotiated item.

Is the out-of school suspension center – they want to do if that is going to be followed through on?

Yes, the discipline AP's are meeting on Monday, October 20th to put together a presentation that they will be giving to the Board at their October 23rd work session. Once this happens it will be up to the Board to decide whether or not the money will be allocated for an out-of-school suspension center.

As an update, the AP's did present this to the Board at the October 20th work session. They provided an excellent presentation. However, the Board asked additional questions which the AP's will work on for the November 13th work session.

Are we to receive questions for this group only from faculty, or from custodial?

It was my hope and intention that whoever was chosen to represent their school would represent all employees, certified and classified. In fact, it would probably be a good idea to seek out the classified employees to let them know they have a voice.

Why are we pushing for Benchmark (testing)?

Benchmark testing has been used for years at the elementary and middle school level. It is only a new concept for the high schools. The sole purpose is to help teachers know where their students are. This enables teachers to change their teaching to be more aligned with the skill level of their students. For example, if a teacher has taught a skill but when given a benchmark test, the students do not score well, the teacher will adjust their teaching by going back and reviewing the topic. Or, in an advanced class, if the students score high on many skills, there is really no need for the teacher to spend time on those skills.

What kind of steps or planning do we do in order to help teachers to buy into new approaches? Is there some type of approach to that?

At the district-level, the central office supervisors and I communicate mostly with principals and/or assistant principals. We explain upcoming changes or initiatives to

them. Conversely, it is the principals and/or assistant principals that communicate to teachers. We depend on them to get the message out which would, of course, include the 'why' behind changes. Of course, if there is a concern, employees can always send a question through their building representative or click on the "Ask the Director" link on our website.

. Do you know if all the counties in the State got the same amount of money? This comes from a teacher who said she knows Dickson County teachers got more money in their bonus check than we did – and why is that?

Yes and no. All counties received an equal amount per teacher for the bonus. However, some counties, such as Dickson, added additional money to the money sent down by the state. On the other hand, the Board did appropriate funds our classified employees to receive the very same bonus as teachers.

It's stated that if the bonuses had been included in the October check, not as much would have been taken out for taxes. Why wasn't that done?

The law stated that the bonuses must be paid on or before October 1st. This would have made them too late to include in the October 15th payroll.

Attendance has become a major issue for teachers to deal with. Some students are missing one or two classes, consistently coming for others. It has become an issue for several reasons – if students get a half day they are not counted absent by the State. Therefore, they do not go before the Truancy Board – in spite of missing some classes but not others.

Information provided by Attendance Supervisor Kinny Jones: State law says students have to attend school until they turn eighteen. State law says that when they have five unexcused absences, the school system has to take some type of action. Two things are in place for that. One is a law that says we have to send home a letter. Our student management systems are already programmed so that each day your attendance person pushes a button, it writes a letter for the children who, on that day, hit their fifth unexcused, their tenth unexcused day, or their fifteenth unexcused day. That letter goes home. We have to do that by law. The other part says we will take some type of action. We could bring them into Juvenile Court with five unexcused days, but Judge Maxey knows that would do to his Juvenile Court. He has asked that we create a Student Attendance Board. We have done that and we meet every Friday. We hear the cases of students who have five or more unexcused – some of you have served on that Board from time to time. We also hear cases of students who have not a single day of unexcused absences, but they have got an abundance of tardies and things like that. We have to deal with them a different way. The ones who have five or more unexcused, we have the big stick of Juvenile Court We usually say you need to go right on and let us get you before Judge Maxey or we say more often – at the next unexcused absence Mr. Jones is going to petition you to Juvenile Court. But we don't normally hear those cases, we hear cases of students who are habitually tardy or habitually leave early – haven't missed a

single day of school. Sometimes it is hard for a parent to understand why they are coming before a Student Attendance Board -- My kid has been at school every day. But they have missed a portion of the day. Likewise, high schools could bring students in who are just missing a single class, if they wanted to, and seek the help of the Student Attendance Board. We will give whatever help the Student Attendance Board can legally provide.

Are you becoming convinced that this system is superior to time for time? Is it too early to tell?

Yes, it is too early to tell.

I know there are private schools that run a Saturday school; could we charge students to miss school to attend make-up sessions?

No.

Explain the SDHA process.

If a student misbehaves to the point that their principal feels they are deserving of an out-of-school suspension of more than ten days, the student and their parent are required to come before the SDHA.

A hearing before the SDHA can be loosely described as a jury trial. The 'jury' consists of at least three administrators. These administrators are normally central office supervisors, principals, or assistant principals. As a side note, no principal or assistant principal ever serves on the hearing authority when the hearing concerns one of their students.

The student and their parent come to present their 'side of the story' while the school's principal or discipline AP presents evidence from the school. Each side is provided an opportunity to speak. The school provides documentation which would include the student's grades, discipline record, attendance record, and any other documentation concerning the case. Other documentation might include statements from teachers or other students who may have witnessed the alleged misbehavior.

If I were to pick one school that consistently goes above and beyond in presenting the school's side of the issue, it would be Harpeth Middle School. Their discipline AP Detra Emery, who is following in the shoes of former discipline AP Angela McCarthy, provides a three-ring binder of the documentation for each case. This method ensures all available information is available to assist the SDHA in making the correct decision. It is thorough and speaks to the professionalism we strive for in our school district.

After hearing both sides, the SDHA convenes behind closed doors to discuss and weigh the evidence. Based on the facts presented to the SDHA, an appropriate punishment is given. The hearing is then reconvened and the decision of the SDHA is given.

What happens if a parent or school administrator does not agree with the punishment given by the SDHA? They may appeal to the School Board. Once an appeal is made, the Board, after receiving a redaction of the hearing, must decide to uphold the decision of the SDHA, lessen the punishment given by the SDHA, or rehear the case.

Can't the director of schools intervene in this situation? No, sometimes the director of schools actually serves on the SDHA. For example, I will be taking my turn serving on the SDHA on October 23rd. I could not intervene on a decision I helped make.

Are there any potential upcoming changes in the SDHA? Yes, we have recently learned that if an alleged victim and their parents want to come with the school administrator and give evidence, they can legally do so. However, as there is not an alleged victim in most cases, this would not affect a great number of hearings.

To ensure that we all stay on our toes, an SDHA refresher course will be provided on the afternoon of November 5th. Former Board chairman Barry Breen and discipline AP's Theresa Chandler of CCCHS and Detra Emery of HMS will serve as instructors. A few years ago, Breen and Chandler actually gave a presentation on SDHA's at the National School Board Association's annual conference. I'm positive that this trio will bring much knowledge to the upcoming training.

A question was raised concerning playground equipment for handicapped students at ACES.

Mrs. McCarver, SPED Supervisor, has promised to check on the situation referenced.