Larry B. Hammond, Superintendent

Board Report

July 20, 2021

Staffing changes continue as an item of concern as we approach the opening day for 2021. We currently have the following vacancies.

* Drug Free Communities grant position
* School Psychologist
* Speech Pathologist
* Computer Technician
* High School Math Teaching position
* (2) Elementary Teaching Positions
* (2) Instructional Assistant Positions
* (2) Pre-School Instructional Assistant Positions
* Substitute Bus Drivers remain a constant need (very/no interest is detected)

As the salary schedules are reviewed and discussed with the Board, I expect a common thread through most vacancies where personnel have left the district. The salary increases available, particularly in Northern Kentucky Districts, create a significant challenge to retain well trained and experienced staff. We will be evaluating our overall staffing formula in conjunction with the salary schedule to ensure efficiency of resources remains a priority with the decision-making process. The intent to maximize transparency throughout the district inclusive of the board of education, will remain at the top of our list. Due to the challenge of retaining experienced staff, it is essential to develop systems to enable the continuity of services with inexperienced staff. This is also true with staff that come from other districts within the Commonwealth as well as other states. The ongoing MTSS work with consultants will generate greater dividends with the passage of time.

We have addressed the shortage of custodians through the contract with Interstate Maintenance at the Upper/Middle School. Training has occurred with our custodians regarding proper floor care to ensure tile floors retain their original look, preventing wax build up and discoloration in addition to actual cleanliness. The contractor is doing high quality work that will serve as a good model for our custodians. However, the shortage of custodians continues to increase while the interest of potential applicants remains at an all time low. Bottom line, we do not have folks interested in becoming a custodian at this time. I know this conversation links to the overall vacancy issue but also warrants the consideration of the impact being felt when adults can receive more financial gain and benefits not working than when fully employed. We currently have 3 custodians at the Lower Elementary after one recently resigned due to health concerns. In addition, one of three remaining custodians is planning to retire. We have 3 custodians at the high school and one for the Upper/Middle for the day shift. Needless to say, this is very inadequate. In the absence of greater interest in the custodial positions, we will likely be discussing the possibility of extending the contract for custodial services with Interstate Maintenance.

While I have primarily focused our needs regarding personnel, I will quickly remind you of the commitment of the staff to address the learning deficit as a result of our COVID experience. The data shared in the ESSER Committee meeting was not received in time to share with teachers prior to the closing of the 2020 – 2021 school year. CASE data in conjunction with iREADY data is being reviewed by principals and their leadership team. We must remember this data is base line and will be compared to results in the fall. Comparing assessments during or immediately following COVID to previous years should not occur. Students will be met at their level with plans to Accelerate the learning vs. the previous efforts to Remediate. This will not be accomplished in one year. The set-back from COVID will require years of implementation of well-developed and revised plans. The Acceleration model promotes the student focusing on the most critical work of their grade level. This is in comparison, the Remediation model that has students focusing most of their time on work below their grade level in hopes they will catch up. Studies suggest the acceleration model will generate the most significant results in less time. An example would be working on concepts in math and completing problems. If students can display their ability to master concepts/material with 5 problems, why should they do complete sheets/drills of the same concepts? Actions such as this have occurred previously in remediation efforts. We will have the assistance of OVEC, which also received ESSER funds to provide guidance with Accelerated Learning.