

Meeting Minutes for FCPS' Human Resource Advisory Committee, March 4, 2019
Approved as Amended on April 1, 2019

Location: Gatehouse

Committee Members Present: Melanie Kadlic Meren (Co-Chair), Abrar Omeish (Co-Chair) Megan McLaughlin (School Board Liaison), Helen Nixon (Staff Liaison), Leonard Bumbaca, Howard Dwyer, Steve Fiumano, Mia Giaon, Cheri Larkins, Alicia Plerhoples, Tiffany Pryce Russom, Lisa Raj, Brian Willey

Members of the Public Present: Tina Williams, Brittany Buke, Patricia Kremer, Nic McCoy, Haliz Russom

Guest Speakers: Dr. Frances Ivey, FCPS Deputy Superintendent; Dr. Fabio Zuluaga, FCPS Region 2 Assistant Superintendent

Minutes recorded by: Melanie Meren

- **6:00pm Meeting Called to Order by Melanie Meren**
- **Reviewed and approved February 2019 meeting minutes**
- **Discussed planning for April meeting, which will focus on identifying recommendations for the final report to the School Board in June.**
 - **Discussed the possibility of having guests in May** who can provide information or help the committee reflect on its findings. These could include:
 - Teachers union representatives
 - Principals
 - Society of Human Resource Management
 - NAACP staff
 - SEIU union staff
 - **In conclusion, the April meeting will be an hour longer, running from 6pm – 9pm. HRAC will not host any additional speakers during that time – it will be an HRAC working meeting.**
- **Presentation by Guest Speakers, Dr. Ivey and Dr. Zuluaga.**

Dr. Ivey: Three priorities regarding supporting educators are 1) having strong tier 1 instruction; 2) the climate and culture of the school; and 3) having strong professional learning communities. “Fit and match” are critical for mutual success of the teacher and the school.

Dr. Zuluaga: FCPS has experienced a new challenge in supporting teachers due to the influx of students in poverty. Need to ensure that educators are getting the support needed to teach such students. There is a “constant checking” of school climate and culture.

Dr. Ivey: The Great Beginnings program for new teachers has been helpful.

FCPS shared how FCPS collects data on teacher experience:

- Dr. Zuluaga: FCPS has a “working conditions survey”, now a “K-12 engagement survey”, distributed in January / February annually to teachers and parents. The Regional Assistant Superintendent (RAS) meets with each principal to review the survey results. Principals receive the survey results from teachers and parents on regular timelines.
- Dr. Zuluaga has conducted 800 school site visits in his Region. This helps establish “good relationships.”
- There are discussions in schools, like focus groups.
- Dr. Zuluaga said, “This is a school division that demands a lot from you. It requires a great deal of work and commitment.”
- HRAC Committee members asked how standardized these approaches are across FCPS. The approaches seemed to vary from school to school.
- There was repeated mention of FCPS “constantly reviewing” and “always looking” at data.
- There are regular meetings that are all county and at the regional levels.
- Dr. Zuluaga: The relationship between the administrator and the teacher is so unique, that it makes each school unique.
- Steve Fiumano asked about how FCPS acknowledges bias in its data, such as in teacher survey responses if teachers feel they cannot share all of the details of their professional experience.
- Guest speakers said that FCPS takes all feedback seriously; they look for themes they are seeing and hearing from the feedback.
- The protocol and cycle of data analysis has this time of hear being a time for collecting data about intentions to return to positions in the next year. There are many staffing meetings.
- Dr. Ivey said that looking at schools situationally is needed. For example, there was a school that had 25 teachers leave. It was a mix of teachers leaving due to an increased population of special education students, teachers who wanted to experience teaching at a different grade level, teachers relocating because of a spouse’s job, and several teachers retiring.
- Alicia Plerhoples asked if FCPS engages teachers pre-emptively, before problems arise. Dr. Zuluaga responded that because RASs are in the building so often, communications with teachers happens. RASs are conducting walk-throughs, observations, planning meetings, etc. RASs are asking, “How can we support you, what do you need?”
- Some principals have a School Improvement Plan (SIP) that dictates the exact kind of support necessary.
- Three RASs are assigned about 40 schools. [The following information was recorded after the meeting:
 - Region 1 has 40 schools
 - Region 2 has 47 schools
 - Region 3 has 48 schools
 - Region 4 has 40 schools
 - Region 5 has 34 schools
 Each region has one RAS and two Executive Principals.]
- Tina Williams asked about the process for removing a principal who isn’t the right fit. The guest speakers said that FCPS addresses this through conferences, summary memos identifying the issues, action and performance plans with

specific outcomes and deadlines, additional professional development and training.

- **Committee members brainstormed initial final report recommendations and topics:**
 - **Explore a companion initiative to Project Momentum, for principals,** to help be can be proactive against teachers leaving.
 - **Have the right vehicle to remove the personal factor from data collection, and get the needed data.** Megan McLaughlin noted that a question that was included in past surveys to obtain critical information from teachers recently was removed.
 - **Have regular (monthly) meetings with unions and School Board Members.**
 - **Improve the survey system and protocol.**
 - **Acknowledge the role of school boundaries in contributing to concentrated poverty, which means having more students in a school with higher needs.** The high demands of this population may contribute to teacher turn over.
 - **Understand what teachers think is the ideal school climate. Capture this information from them to understand their desired working conditions.**
 - **Recognize that it's not just salary that is critical for retaining teachers – data from FCPS teachers show that “respect” is the next biggest factor after pay.** Teachers are asked to do too much, and they have little protection in many situations and aspects of their job.
 - **Collect data on time usage.** Understand the amount and depth of tasks teachers are assigned and expected to complete, in different time frames. Understand “unencumbered time”, time used for professional development, etc. Identify what the optimal mix of time usage is.
 - **Further, about data collection:**
 - **Have a clear protocol**
 - **Have a timeline and long term plan**
 - **Follow up with people (randomly?)**
 - **Consider how middle management is able to mentor teachers and teacher leaders to move up their career ladder from classroom to leadership positions.** Understand what currently exists to help middle managers (school administrators and others) to train and mentor teachers in becoming school leaders and administrators themselves.
- **Follow up requested of FCPS staff liaisons:**
 1. Receive the list of data collection vehicles used by FCPS – that is, any data collection instruments. Additionally, information on if and how the data collected is analyzed and put to use.
 2. Ask the Office of Research and Strategic Improvement (ORSI) to conduct an extended analysis of the kind presented to HRAC in February, to include multiple years.
 3. Receive a description or list of the specific best practices being used in FCPS to address retention, which may be a summary of where FCPS is in this work in progress.
- **8:00pm Adjourned.**