RICHMOND COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Augusta, Georgia 30901 - 1215
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JIMMY ATKINS
President

JAMES F. THOMPSON
Interim Superintendent

JOE L. SCOTT
Vice-President

TO: All Board Members

FROM: James F. Thompson JFT

DATE: May 4, 2007

RE: Butler High School PTSA

Please find attached a copy of Administration's responses to Butler High School's PTSA questions submitted after the Meet and Greet held at the school. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to give me a call.

JFT/cpb

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May 4, 2007

Butler High School PTSA
ATTN: Ms. Lisa Winebrenner
2011 Lumpkin Road
Augusta, GA 30906

Dear Ms. Winebrenner:

Please find attached Administration's responses, typed in blue, to the questions submitted after the Meet and Greet held at the school. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to give me a call.

Yours truly,

James F. Thompson
Interim Superintendent

JFT/cpb

Attachments

cc: QLT
Board Members
Mr. Leonard O. Fletcher

Butler High School PTSA
everychild.onevoice.

2011 Lumpkin Road
Augusta, GA 30906
http://bhsptsa.googlepages.com

1. Can you tell us about the capital outlay program (regular, regular advance, and incentive advance) for our schools? Are the local school system's facility needs of each school determined by the Board annually?

2. Where is the 5 Year Plan for facilities that identify the School system's facility needs and is submitted to the Georgia Department of Education? When was the last plan submitted to and approved by GA Department of Education?

3. Where is the "Good Idea" bank? Where can we submit our ideas to improve our schools? Where can we see the previously accepted/rejected ideas that are submitted?

   Board members told us that we have access to their contact information from the handout distributed during the Meet and Greet and all contact information is available on the RCBOE website. How do we know what ideas have already been submitted? Is there some type of repository for lessons learned? Good ideas? Accepted/Rejected ideas?

4. How do we provide information to the board for consideration before they make a final decision about committing SPLOST funds? Attached is a copy of the SPLOST brochure.

   Board members told us that we have access to their contact information from the handout distributed during the Meet and Greet and all contact information is available on the RCBOE website. We still have no idea who has submitted ideas and what was accepted/rejected.

5. What is the life cycle of the portables/modular buildings? Why does Butler have portables that were certified for occupancy in 1971?
   The lifecycle of a portable is 15 to 20 years if it is not moved too often.

6. What is the life cycle replacement for furniture used in the school by teachers and students?
   There is no replacement policy in Richmond County School System. We do have a furniture repair shop where furniture is refurbished. The staff is small and handles priority items such as safety needs and items needed for new or special programs.

7. How can the board vote for panic buttons to be installed when all classrooms do not have communications (one or two way) with the front office?

8. What is a school board member's responsibility to their assigned schools? Are they required to visit their assigned schools? Participate in video-teleconferences with schools' stakeholders? Conduct forums to share what is working and what is not working within our districts?
   Board members represent citizens and their interest as a collective body. They may visit schools and often do so. It is appropriate in invite your representatives and any other board member to events and activities at your school.

9. Is there any type of program where good ideas are shared amongst all schools, rewarded, and acknowledged?
   - Our website has private and public tools for sharing and acknowledging teachers' work and contributions to education. eChalk discussion groups are utilized by several of the curriculum coordinators for teachers to share and discuss instructional ideas. The "Resources Area" allows them to share websites, documents, and etc. The survey tool enables the various curriculum groups to share opinions or vote on controversial topics that merit the use of this tool. The calendar area provides everyone with the ability to share assignments, meeting times, and other types of dated activities.
   - Teachers of the Year are highlighted annually on our homepage. A link to this webpage is under the District Info navigation button.
   - A Cool School News section of the district's homepage has been created for all schools to share any of their accomplishments or outstanding school events. We have notified media specialist to share this with their schools.
   - BlackBoard is an online tool that is private for teaching online classes. The Teaching American History Grant incorporated this as a medium for teachers to share lessons and discuss topics and ideas. They have also shared their lesson plans and resources at http://www.richmond.k12.ga.us/ushistory for everyone to use.
   - eMath Grant teachers in grades 3-5 share their lessons online in the eMath Portal; which is a private online tool provided by the Georgia Department of Education.
   - Board meetings provide time for teachers and their students to be recognized for their accomplishments. These meetings are televised monthly. These types of announcements are also posted on the website upon request.
   - Principal meetings, Assistant Principals, Department Chair Meetings, Guidance Counselors Meetings, Professional Development Activities and Celebrations – ex. SAT
   - Pencil Points – a system publication
   - Colleagues Communiqué
   - Curriculum Subject area district activities such as United States Academic Decathlon, Governors Honors, Math Teams, Science Fair
   - Various tech prep countywide competitions among students
   - School newsletters, bulletins, marquees and bulletin boards

10. When will the bathrooms be renovated at Butler?

    This was addressed at the Meet and Greet but not resolved. The bathrooms at Butler need more than basic maintenance. The pictures are posted on the BHS PTSA website. **Dr. Reeves stated that the bathrooms are scheduled for renovation during the summer break.**

Jeff Baker with Hanscomb GMK reported at the Committee Meeting on Tuesday, April 10, 2007, Bathroom Renovations of 5 toilets in the Main building are scheduled to take place during the summer of 2007. Don Rupert, Project Manager, has confirmed the bathroom renovations would begin after the Last Day of School to be completed during the summer months.

11. Why don't we have more encouragement, requirements, or support for parent and community involvement for our schools? What about asking parents, students, and community partners to join in the School Improvement Plan to improve their local schools?
Parents and community members are a part of school councils and school improvement teams in each school.

12. What is the plan to acquire and retain good teachers in the classroom?
The following recruitment and retention goals have been established for the 2006-2007 school year:

Recruitment Goals:

a. Recruit only highly qualified teachers.
b. Increase the number of retired individuals who are able to go recruiting to prevent last minute cancellations in employees' schedules.
c. Request an increase in pay for highly qualified retired teachers who are willing to return to work.
d. Request that a local supplement be added to the salary scale at the provisional levels.
e. Request PSC program approval for a local TAPP program to eliminate the tuition cost for TAPP candidates.
f. Complete teacher allocations early in order to make early assignments and become more competitive with surrounding school districts.

Retention Goals:

a. Encourage mentor teachers who have not completed Teacher Support Specialist training to do so and provide a stipend.
b. Assure school and system support for individual plans for becoming highly qualified.
c. Assign mentors for new principals to provide support and alleviate the overwhelming feelings and mind-set.
d. Provide high quality training for teachers to increase student achievement.

What incentives do the teachers have to continue in the local system?

a. Health Insurance
b. Dental Insurance
c. Vision Insurance
d. Retirement
e. Deferred Compensation Plans
f. Credit Union
g. Life and ADD&D Insurance

h. Disability Insurance (Long and Short Term)
i. Vacations (available for 12-month employees)
j. Holidays
k. Sick leave up to 90 days with incentive pay for perfect attendance
l. Jury Duty Pay
m. Direct deposit
n. Payroll Deduction for Professional Organization Dues

13. What is the plan to improve the graduation rate? What can we do as a community to be one part of the solution?
    - Graduation Coaches: All high school, except Davidson and Johnson, have been provided graduation coaches
    - Saturday School: Some high schools provide Saturday School, some under Title I and some under 20 day Instructional Extension to provide tutoring for students who need extra help in current classes.
    - Virtual School Courses: Each high school is allocated 10 seats, these can be used to meet individual student needs for graduation.
    - After School – 20 Day Instructional Extension: Some high schools use 20 day instructional extension money to provide tutoring Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday to students that need extra help.
    - Analysis of data for target populations: Data is continuously analyzed and communicated to school as a means of monitoring progress and student achievement for the whole school as well as target AYP groups in the school.
    - Test Prep: The Science and math departments have provided Test Prep software for Georgia High School Graduation Test practice and End Of Course Test Practice. Language Arts and Social Studies will include purchase of software in the 2007-2008 textbook budget.
    - As a community, formulate goals to address drop out prevention. Include a specific platform in your community organizations strategic plan to address drop-out prevention
    - Identify children in your community who may be potential drop-outs
    - Monitor truancy in your community
    - Create homework centers in your neighborhood equipped with state of the art technology
    - Help to identify volunteers that have educational backgrounds in the particular subjects that are offered in the schools
    - Continue to be involved as parents

14. What are we doing to ensure our students gain the required skills and knowledge to function in higher education and the work force?
    - Implementation of the Richmond County Academic Reform Plan, which emphasizes a rigorous curriculum for all students along with identified course pathways in Career, Technical and Agricultural Education.
    - Students can participate in the “Tech Prep” program – a college credit program with Augusta Technical College.
    - Dual enrollment between Richmond County High Schools, Augusta Technical College or Augusta State University with articulated courses.

- The Butler High School Reform plan was implemented this year with complete board support. The school will continue to improve.

15. In what ways are the Board Members creating partnerships in education that benefit the students? How do the board members involve parents and community partners to build support for quality public schools?