Professional Personnel Leadership Committee (PPLC) Meeting Notes

Date: October 1st, 2024

Time: 3:30 PM

Location: Room 104

Purpose: The purpose of the committee is to develop and formally present recommendations to the principal and the local school council on all matters of educational program, including but not limited to curriculum, school improvement plan development and implementation, and school budgeting.

Attendees:

Jennifer Velazquez (Co-chairperson) – Present

Leandro Padilla (Co-chairperson) – Present

Marvin Evins (Secretary) – Present

Andrew Martinek, NBCT (Open Meetings Act Officer) – Present

Sean O'Bra (FOIA Officer) – Present

Andrzej Jarmoc (Community Relations Officer) – Present

Lucy Wright (Sustenance Officer) – Present

Katherine Donalek – Absent (Doctor's Appointment)

Assistant Principal Marlon Mclachlan – Absent

Summary

The meeting details a discussion among members of a school committee focused on refining the procedures and tools for staff feedback. Key topics include revisions to the PPLC feedback form, which had been misused in the past for anonymous inflammatory submissions. The committee debates whether to require names on the form to ensure accountability or maintain anonymity to encourage open participation, especially from newer or hesitant staff members. Dr. Harper emphasizes the need to build trust and a positive environment, expressing concern that anonymity could lead to a repeat of last

year's issues. Other members argue that anonymous submissions are important for those who may feel uncomfortable sharing their feedback openly.

The group discusses modifications to the form's language, suggesting it focus on "ideas and recommendations" rather than "concerns" to promote constructive input. They also propose adding categories for staff to select from, such as curriculum, instruction, and professional development. There is a discussion about adding confidentiality statements and reminders of professional conduct.

In addition to the feedback form, the committee talks about logistical matters, including reviewing meeting procedures, ensuring transparency, and making the form available through internal channels like weekly reminders. The conversation reflects a broader goal of fostering school improvement, with an emphasis on instructional practices and staff collaboration.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by **Leandro Padilla**.

2. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was reviewed and approved.

Motion to approve previous meeting minutes: Moved and seconded. Motion passed unanimously

3. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Review and approve minutes from the last meeting. All present approved the minutes

4. Announcements

Upcoming Events:

- **Hispanic Heritage Month** event planned.
- **Network Walkthrough**: Scheduled for October or November, confirmed on the school-wide calendar.

Reminders:

- **ILT walkthroughs** and network walkthrough training are upcoming.

5. Officer Reports

Complaints/Documentation: Meeting minutes will be posted on the website tomorrow.

6. Unfinished Business

Staff Feedback Form Review:

- **Key Changes**:
  - Proposal to categorize feedback more clearly (e.g., curriculum, instruction, professional development, etc.).
  - Suggested change in phrasing from "express your concerns" to "share your ideas."
  - Discussion on whether multiple concerns should be submitted in a single form or if each issue should be addressed separately.
  - Concern was raised about staff needing to fill out multiple forms for different issues.

Feedback Form Purpose:

- Discussion about clarifying the purpose of the form at the top of the document to ensure staff understand that it should not be used for personal grievances but for curriculum, instruction, and professional development-related issues.
- It was agreed that staff concerns regarding colleagues should be addressed directly with the administration or union delegates, not through the PPLC form.

7. New Business

Form Revisions:

- New phrasing for feedback categories: "ideas/recommendations" rather than "concerns."
- Debate over the option to submit anonymous feedback. Some members argued for including a name to foster accountability, while others emphasized the need for anonymity, especially for junior staff who may fear retaliation.
- **Compromise Proposal**: Start with anonymous submissions and revisit the policy after a trial period (suggested by January).

PD Leader Question:

- Suggestion to add a yes/no question about whether staff would be willing to lead a professional development (PD) session related to their recommendation.

8. Discussion Items

Tone of the Form:

- The group discussed ensuring the form reflects professionalism and encourages solution-driven feedback.
- Concerns were raised about the length and tone of certain paragraphs in the form, particularly those related to gossip or inappropriate behavior, and a decision was made to shorten and streamline the language.

Names on the Form:

- Some members expressed strong opposition to anonymous feedback, stating that if the issue is important enough, staff should be willing to attach their names.
- **Dr. Harper** emphasized the importance of accountability and the need to safeguard the work environment from negativity, encouraging transparency.

Motion to Approve Form:

- **Proposal**: Keep the form anonymous for now and review its effectiveness on a monthly basis.
- **Motion passed** to adopt the form with the inclusion of confidentiality and staff conduct guidelines.

Democracy School Team Report was made and is posted separately:

9. Next Meeting

- **Feedback Form Rollout**:
  - The form will be made available to staff and shared in weekly announcements.
  - It will not be posted on the website to prevent misuse, but it will be circulated internally to staff via email and weekly reminders.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30pm.