

One Team. One Mission. One Rock Hill.

TEACHER LISTEN & LEARN



DECEMBER 14, 2018
CENTRAL OFFICE



ROCK HILL
Schools

TEACHER LISTEN & LEARN

Dear Rock Hill Team,

Now that we are fully immersed in the holiday season, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all Rock Hill Schools employees for the work you do each and every day to benefit students in our community. Each of you continue to use your gifts to make this an amazing place that remains focused on doing what is best for our students every day. It has been a joy to observe the level of student engagement during my visits to each school, and I continue to be impressed by the outstanding educators in our school district. I encourage you to "unplug" over Winter Break and spend time with family and friends. I look forward to an equally exciting and productive second semester to our school year.

We continue our Focus Five for the 2018-19 year which serves as the foundation for our work, and will be embedded into our continuous improvement efforts, our Strategic Plan, and our district's AdvancED accreditation. The areas are:

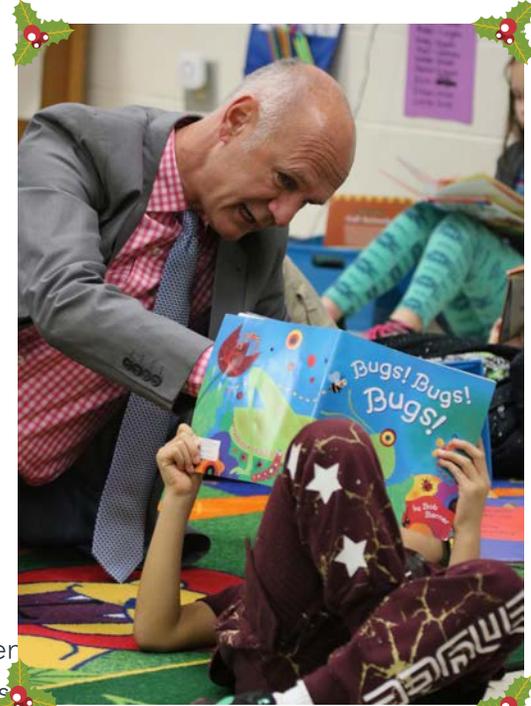
1. Safety & Security
2. Recruitment & Retention
3. Student Achievement
4. Organizational Culture & Effectiveness
5. Communication with All Stakeholders

Aligned with the focus on communication and as an essential part of my effort in hosting monthly Listen & Learn sessions with teachers representing each school, and I have enjoyed being able to hear from our teachers about successes and areas for continued growth for our district, as well as share important information about what is taking place across our district. Responses to questions can be found on the following pages. These responses are not all-inclusive, and we would certainly welcome the opportunity to further discuss these questions and other relevant topics in more detail within specific levels and school settings. If you have follow up questions or desire more information, please contact one of our Cabinet team members. You may find an organizational chart with contact information on the following page.

Our schools and district will benefit from this open dialog regarding the needs that exist for our students, staff, and organization overall. District leaders and I look forward to continuing this Listen & Learn series each month throughout the year, meeting with representatives chosen by the principals of each school. Our next Teacher Listen and Learn session with teachers will take place on Friday, January 18 with questions due to your teacher representative by January 11.

Working together as One Team on One Mission for One Rock Hill, we will move our district forward to be the best in our state!

Sincerely,
Bill Cook



TEACHER LISTEN & LEARN

ROCK HILL SCHOOLS DISTRICT LEADERSHIP TEAM



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In the following pages, questions raised at the most recent Teacher Listen & Learn are answered. Due to the nature of some questions, we are not able to provide a complete response since we may not be aware of the context in which the question or concern is shared. If you desire additional information or have additional questions, please contact a member of Cabinet. Our team members are ready to assist you with more information.



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TEACHER LISTEN & LEARN

Will all teachers receive a Clear Touch Panel? If so, what is the timeline for receiving this technology & training? I am very thankful for the Promethean Board & document camera I am able to use in my classroom now, just curious if Clear Touch is on the horizon for all.

The district has a plan to replace aging boards with new panels/screens at a certain percentage each year. Bond funding and any additional sources at the district level will be used to meet replacement targets each year. The Technology Council will also be involved in this process as well. If there are further questions, please contact John James in Technology Services for assistance.

Will the students have to make up the inclement weather day missed on Dec. 10th? If so, when?

Our calendar adheres to SC State Law and district policy. Both require three make-up days to be included in the calendar and for the three days to be used if needed and if available. State law outlines the process by which districts can seek forgiveness for additional days missed. Days 1-3 must be made up. Days 4-6 can be waived/forgiven by the local school board at the request of the superintendent. Days 7-9 can be waived/forgiven by the state board of education at the request of the local school board. In the event 10 or more days are missed, the days can be waived/forgiven by the General Assembly. Given this, it is likely that administration will seek forgiveness from the school day missed on December 10, 2018.

When will ALL teachers be receiving ClearTouch Panels since projectors are fading fast? If ClearTouch panels are not in the future, what is the alternative for those that have non-working Smart Boards?

Please see the response to the first question above.

Is it possible for our future calendars to include one teacher workday per nine weeks to ensure accurate grading and planning is prepared for the next quarter?

A 39-member committee met in October and November to develop drafts for the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 calendars. This was discussed along with other requests and each was considered. The calendar development process is largely constrained by state law. No calendar will meet everyone's expectations and wishes, but the committee works diligently to develop the best calendar focused on students first. The proposed calendars were approved by the Board of Trustees on Monday, December 17, do not include a work day in each nine week term. There is, however, an improved distribution of professional development days compared to the current 2018-2019 calendar. You may view and download copies of the calendar on our website, www.rock-hill.k12.sc.us/calendar.



What is our district doing to promote National Board Certification, knowing that the district stipend has been taken away and the state one will follow shortly after?

The district continues to support National Board Certification. We held several support sessions last year for those that were going through the process for the first time. A few weeks ago, we hosted a regional renewal meeting where CERRA came in and explained renewal and answered questions for those in attendance.

TEACHER LISTEN & LEARN

How is our district addressing teacher retention?

The district is continuously evaluating our recruitment and retention plan. One of the strategies implemented last year for teacher retention was our Learning to Rock orientation for all new certified teachers in the district. We hired an additional .5 teacher support specialist to support our first year teachers in addition to assigning each first year teacher a mentor.

Last year, we administered our first job satisfaction survey. Data from that survey will be used to guide school and district leaders in retention efforts. Each school has been asked to consider having a retention and recruitment team that will work all year on school specific retention and recruitment strategies. If you are interested on serving on that team, please let your administrator know. Dr. Campbell also has a district retention and recruitment committee if you are interested or have suggestions for the team, please reach out to her.

When will we receive information on a District Wide Grading Policy?

There are current district-wide grading policies and procedures in place and available to teachers/schools. We will make sure principals share the current guidelines with teachers. That being said, we are working on reviewing grading policies and procedures this year, and stakeholder committees will be utilized in the spring semester. More information will follow soon. If you are interested in serving on a committee for this process, please contact Dr. Missy Brakefield or Jen Morrison in the Instruction Department

The school report cards just came out, most elementary schools are average or below. What is the plan to improve these results for next year?

There are goals and strategies in place at the school and district levels. Strategies for school improvement at the district level include school improvement plans, data meetings with the superintendent and cabinet staff on a quarterly basis, high quality visits from district staff, use and review of formative, benchmark, and summative data for improvement, support with PLC planning and school goals, and support from district and school coaches for academic planning. The district will continue to help schools analyze their report card data in order to be strategic in school improvement.

After losing a resource teacher at my school, I have students in my class now who are not receiving the services they need because our one resource teacher is working with students with severe behavior challenges. What is your solution to this challenge to support all students?

The resource teacher should be working with students according to their IEP goals and objectives. A resource teacher should not just "take" students based upon their behavior without specific goals on the IEP. If a resource teacher is adding students to his/her caseload due to a shortage of a teacher, it should not result that the teacher is doing so based upon behavior, but upon continuing the IEP prescribed services. For further information, please contact Dr. Nancy Turner in our ESE office.

TEACHER LISTEN & LEARN

One of the biggest concerns from teachers in general is that we rarely, if ever, get a teacher workday just to work and learn from each other. We have new math resources coming next school year for Algebra 1, Geometry, & Algebra 2. It would be most beneficial to math teachers to be given a workday or two to teach and learn from each other with these new resources.

There are five work days built into the calendar. These days are for school level work or individual teacher work. How the days are scheduled/used is determined by the building level administrator.

There is a shortage of qualified and dependable subs in the district. Have we considered raising substitute pay? It's not an easy job to sub. It's so important to make sure we have competent individuals in the pool of substitutes.

Retention of substitutes is a priority for the district. Increase in sub pay is something that we will consider as we develop the budget for next year.

When will there be a new self-contained Pre-K classroom created? Our numbers will soon be overwhelming and students will continue to come throughout the year.

The district ESE office monitors numbers and enrollment for all programs to support students. We are currently examining needs for the upcoming school year and will begin to plan for expansion of 2019-2020 classes and programming beginning in January. Keep in mind that students with disabilities, at CCDC, should always be considered for the K-Prep, full day classroom if appropriate. There are always options for students that have mild disabilities and are ready to join the regular 4K classrooms at CCDC as well. It is important to continually progress monitor your students to see if they are ready to move into a full day program, allowing students with more significant needs to remain at CCDC for services. Please share your specific information, questions, or concerns with Dr. Nancy Turner, Director of ESE Programs. You are welcome to e-mail her at NTurner@rhmail.org and offer any information that will be useful as we plan for the upcoming year.



What is being done for the teacher shortage that we are currently starting to see here in our schools? This could be affecting our students education needs already due to lack of teachers in the classrooms.

We continue to recruit teachers for our current vacancies. Currently, we have a certified teacher in all core content classes. We have had to rely on teachers from our alternative programs to ensure that we were able to staff each class with a certified teacher.

Is the district considering putting Reading Recovery back into all elementary schools again?

The district would be interested in maximizing our Reading Recovery programming at current and future sites. Full implementation of the program is achieved when district support is robust enough to ensure that every child who needs Reading Recovery services has access to the intervention. This is calculated by determining individual need at individual schools and should not be construed as a district average. In order for Reading Recovery to be offered in all schools, funding must be available for expansion and further implementation. Please note that Federal Funding through title programs will only be able to cover a certain amount of the schools based upon the total poverty index of the student enrollment served. We will continue to seek opportunities and means by which to "grow" this program.

TEACHER LISTEN & LEARN



What forthcoming supports and consequences will be available to students who are in constant crisis and have high ACEs scores that disrupt classroom learning?

This year, 2018-2019, Behavior Management Assistants have been placed in every elementary school and CCDC to assist with our children in crisis. The District has provided ACE's Training for every staff member at all of our schools as well as providing online resources, 321 Insights, for certified and non-certified staff to learn more about trauma informed classrooms, de-escalation strategies and working with students that exhibit challenging behaviors. There is also a book study using Teaching To Strengths: Supporting Students Living with Trauma, Violence, and Chronic Stress, with representatives from all schools, to learn about strengths-based instruction and focusing on the assets and capacities of our children facing adversity. These representatives are to bring the information to their schools and provide insights for day to day challenges. Positive Behavior Intervention Supports, a systemic process to reinforce students that are socially and academically appropriate within the school day provide a solid foundation for our children in crisis. These resources, provided this school year and in

the future, are available for all staff to learn new strategies and interventions as we all work with our children that have high ACE's scores. Disruptions will be minimized as all school staff learn and implement new approaches and strategies becoming an integral part of the general classroom experiences.

Why does Rock Hill not have a long term alternative setting for students with severe behavior issues?

There is a full continuum of services for students with an IEP that exhibit significant behaviors with escalated frequency, duration and intensity. Special education teachers that have students demonstrating a pattern of significant, inappropriate and/or aggressive behaviors work with their teams to develop a behavior intervention plan that all staff in the building will need to follow with fidelity to provide consistency for students to understand the appropriate responses to their classroom experiences. The Building Bridges Classrooms, on the elementary level, provide services for students with severe behavior issues. The Learning Connections Classrooms, for secondary students with behavior issues are a "flipped model" that offer support to students with behavioral struggles as they work towards the diploma pathway.

With the increase in teacher shortages, it seems that we are losing teachers to other districts because of the turnaround time of notification to those who interviewed. What is the reason for the delay in following up with the applicants?

Once a principal has interviewed and checked references, prospective employees are offered the position. Notification of job offer occurs at the school level. If you are aware of a specific concern, please contact Dr. Campbell in our personnel department.



TEACHER LISTEN & LEARN

Calendar - Will there be more Professional Development Work Days built in? And, is it possible for our calendars in the future to have more teacher work days instead of professional development days prior to school beginning so that we can plan with our PLCs?

SC Code of Laws sets parameters and requirements for how districts construct a calendar. SC Code of Laws 59-1-425 states "Three days must be used for collegial professional development based upon the educational standards as required by Section 59-18-300. The professional development must address, at a minimum, academic achievement standards including strengthening teachers' knowledge in their content area, teaching techniques, and assessment. No more than two days may be used for preparation of opening of schools and the remaining five days may be used for teacher planning, academic plans, and parent conferences." In developing the district calendar, the committee comprised of representatives from all schools in the district adhere to state law while meeting as many local expectations as possible. Given the contract term of 190 days, there are not additional days available to be used beyond that which is required by state law.

New Technology for K-2 Teachers and Students?

This will be addressed through the new Technology Committee that meets in January. K-2 teachers will, at some point, be given an opportunity to provide feedback on what devices and technology supports will be targeted in Rock Hill Schools.

As a new 4K teacher, I see the importance of early intervention. In the future, will every school be able to offer a 4K program?

We will look to expand 4K programming according to budget, current offerings, and future strategic goals set for Rock Hill Schools.



The stage lighting systems at both Rock Hill High and Northwestern are out of date and no longer fully functional. Many of the lighting instruments do not work and cannot be replaced due to age. The current light board is dated 1996 and cannot accommodate modern lighting instruments. Additionally, at Rock Hill High, the house lighting system in the auditorium has 18 out of 45 light sockets currently working. We have sent in numerous work orders to have the lights repaired, resulting in only one or two additional lights working for a short period. The lack of lighting creates dark spots on the stage that must be avoided during performance, and makes the house unusable for workshops that require students to read or complete worksheets (such as SAT Prep). Theatre students must learn lighting on antiquated equipment that is not consistent with current technology available in this century. Last year, we received and submitted quotes from several lighting companies for an energy-efficient LED lighting upgrade, but have not heard a response. When is the district planning to address this need?

A capital project has been approved and is under design to address the need at these schools. Please contact Mr. Tony Cox or Mr. Brian Vaughan for additional updates and communication.

Is the district considering putting Reading Recovery back into all elementary schools again?

The district would be interested in maximizing our Reading Recovery programming at current and future sites. Full implementation of the program is achieved when district support is robust enough to ensure that every child who needs Reading Recovery services has access to the intervention. This is calculated by determining individual need at individual schools and should not be based on district-wide averages. **ROCK HILL SCHOOLS | ONE TEAM, ONE MISSION, ONE ROCK HILL.**

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Are there opportunities for PACE Candidates to shadow other district employees to receive additional "on-the job" training?

Each PACE teacher has a school level mentor and district teacher support specialist. There is always opportunities for any teacher, particularly our newest teachers, to shadow other professionals. If you are aware of a teacher that could benefit from shadowing a veteran teacher, please reach out to your school's principal or a district teacher support specialist.

This more so applies to elementary schools, but what is the possibility that subs can have a scan card they can use to get inside from recess? This might be signed in and out upon their arrival. Most of the time they are out with other classes, but that may not always be the case.

Schools have been provided a specified number of access badges to assign to substitutes upon signing in the front at the beginning of the school day. At the end of the day, those badges should be returned to the office. Operations departments are reviewing the inventory of issued badges at each school and will be revising badges for substitutes as needed by each school in the new semester. Principals may request additional badges if needed.

Can you give insight to the extent of the lack of coaches housed in schools? We have a literacy coach in every school but no math or technology coaches.

At the elementary level, School-Based Literacy Coaches are staffed accordingly due to Read to Succeed Legislation. Title 1 Schools may have additional Coaches in other areas based on their Schoolwide Plan. The Schoolwide Title 1 Plan is written to address a Comprehensive Needs Assessment and input from stakeholders.

What constitutes "other duties"? Does this mean that teachers are required to work sporting events nights and on weekends without compensation? Does it mean that a school can set a start/end time that differs from the Rock Hill School District 3 handbook?

Teachers can be asked to work after school events as part of other professional responsibilities. These occurrences should not be excessive. The beginning of the school day is the same for all schools in our district. Teacher arrival and duty times may differ from building to building based on the needs of the school to ensure adequate supervision is in place for students before and after school. Please reach out to Dr. Campbell with additional follow up.

Since our 1:1 laptops are not "mandatory", planning activities is difficult because not all students have access.

Could you please elaborate more regarding what level/grade you teach and what you mean by "mandatory"? In grades 9-12, we provide a device for every student. All students in these grade levels should have access to a 1:1 device as a device is provided for each student. Thus, all students should have access at school to assignments. Please contact Jen Morrison or John Jones for further support in this area. We are happy to assist.



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Is there any plan to hire a grant writer for the District as other school districts in our area do to bring in more money?

At this time, the District does not have plans to hire a grant writer. However, as we enter the budget conversation for next school year, this is something that we can have further conversation about.

Is there a way to block YouTube from student computers? What kind of filters are on the student computers?

Our web filter (iBoss) has students segmented into three groups: Elementary, Middle, and High. Each group can have their own block list. All students have YouTube's SafeSearch turned on. There are countless sites for showing videos, so a better way to regulate the use of videos in class is HP Classroom Manager. It will allow a teacher to set a list of approved sites instead of trying to block sites. Check with your school tech to get on the list for this software.

Is there a way to streamline IEP meetings, so students are not missing minutes due to the meetings? This appears to be a concern at more than one school.

Unfortunately, the IEP meetings must follow the process to insure all areas of concern are discussed and documented. However, there are proactive measures that can be put into place to provide a focused and productive IEP meeting.

- Plan ahead. Plan the IEP meeting in plenty of time before the due date. Schedule the meeting at least two weeks ahead of time. Use your school calendar to plan all of your IEP meetings on your caseload, noting the due dates, when you will send out the invitation to conference, etc.
- Send the "draft" of the IEP to the parent at least 3-5 days before the meeting. Sending a draft of the recommended goals is not "predetermining", it is allowing the parent to review the recommendations from the general ed and special education teachers and then, come to the IEP meeting with suggestions. Make sure there is the word "draft" on the draft IEP sent home
- Allow the parent to review the assessments completed before the IEP meeting (re-evaluation meeting, initial evaluation meeting, etc). The parent should have the opportunity to talk with either the school psychologist, speech pathologist, special educator or general teacher to clarify what the testing results mean. This will cut down on the IEP team time during the meeting
- Have an agenda ready and stick to the agenda for the IEP team meeting. The IEP team Agenda "template" is located on CANVAS in the ESE Department course
- Have a "time keeper" for the IEP meeting, stating there is 5 or so minutes left to finish that particular discussion item.
- If there are other concerns that are not on the agenda, complete all IEP documents for that meeting, sign and close. Then, schedule another time if there are pending issues
- Determine if there are parent issues that are NOT an IEP team discussion, such as OSS and other discipline concerns unless a behavior plan is needed



NEXT TEACHER LISTEN & LEARN WILL BE FRIDAY, JANUARY 18, 2019
SUBMIT QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS TO YOUR SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE

STAY CONNECTED



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