

NOTES - Para Representative Meeting
Thursday, April 21, 2011

The paraeducators' representative meeting was held at the NCKSEC Central Office on Wednesday, April 21, 2011 with all eleven school district representatives in attendance. Representing their districts were #110 Jane Whitney, USD #211 Cathy Kellerman, #212 Annette Puent, #237 Lyna Mace, #269 Connie Keller, #270 Cathy Klein, #271 Misty Higdon, #325 Roxie Ward, #326 Sherry Robinson, #392 Robert Swan and #399 Audrey Maupin. The meeting was conducted by Wes Topel, Assistant Director.

Wes Topel opened the meeting by introducing the new members and asking the group for items to be added to the agenda; "Para Sub" was added. He continued with the following agenda items:

1) Dissemination of Information

Para representatives agreed they practiced sharing acquired information at these meeting with the other paras in their district by combining their personal notes with the NCKSEC notes and distributing it to the paras in all buildings in their district. Regarding other communications from NCKSEC throughout the year, an email is sent to the supervising teacher asking them to share information with their paras. Both practices were well received by staff in the field; thus giving assurance both are effective. The NCKSEC office will initiate in the future using the direct deposit payroll slip to post information as needed.

2) Inservice Requirements

Paras shared a possible reason inservice requirements were not met this year might be the result of the NCKSEC website paraeducator learning network and Infinitic website not being "user friendly" and involving too many steps to access information & tests. Discussed was the possibility of individually training at each district on the two websites, training on the websites at the October meeting, more training offered by the NCKSEC (other than MANDT, CPR, Bal-a-vis-x), and allowing paras who need more than 10 hours access to the Paraeducator Learning Network. Mr. Topel stated budget restraints, along with considering students' needs when paras are absent attending inservices, prohibits having more "centralized" inservices at NCKSEC. The current training (MANDT, CPR, Bal-a-vis-x) is migrating to "on-line" training as much as possible.

3) Work Agreements

At the end of the school year, all work agreement assignments will be reset to match each building's instructional minutes throughout the Coop; to closest 15 minute increments; this was implemented last year. A request by the supervising teacher through the building administrator will be required to consider work agreements beyond that timeframe. The "para in-take" form is used for the request and must be submitted to the NCKSEC office.

4) Beginning of Year Inservice Date

Wes Topel announced the beginning of the year inservice is scheduled for Friday, August 12, 2011. More information on the inservice will be mailed to staff in July. Discussed was the possibility of changing the format of the general session from one speaker presenting 1½ hours to 3 speakers with various topics presenting 30 minutes each. Any suggestions for topics must be submitted to the NCKSEC office before the end of school (May).

5) Open Enrollment

The 125 Cafeteria plan enrollment dates are scheduled for August 3 & 4th. August 3rd is the only day the vendors will be available to address any questions or concerns; those scheduled to attend are BCBS insurance group consultant , American Fidelity, AFLAC, and Waddell & Reed representatives. More information will be mailed to staff in July along with the inservice information.

6) Para Subs

Discussed was the problem of not having para subs available to cover the classroom. Offered as suggestions that may help in recruiting people to become subs and to have them come back were (1) treating the sub professionally, (2) offer them as much support as possible, and (3) encourage them to return by giving them positive feedback on their job well done.

5) Questions/Concerns/Conclusion

Mr. Topel concluded the meeting by informing the para representatives of his active military duty effective August 1st and his replacement. He also asked the paras to end the year on a positive note, not to just "slide out"; but to work through the additional stress and frustration that seems to come at this time each year. He also thanked them for all their hard work and their dedication to the job.

Recorder: J. Turek