

School Administrative District No. 53

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Excellence in Education

Michael A. Gallagher
Superintendent of Schools

Advisory Committee

Minutes

9/8/09

Members in attendance: R. Downs, B. Basford, S. Nolan, R. Williams, D. Fortin, R. McCarthy, C. Hopkins, Headmaster and M. Gallagher, SAD #53 Superintendent

In the absence of Mike Gallagher at the beginning of the meeting, Chris Hopkins provided a review of the opening of school at MCI and Bob Downs et. al. provided an update on consolidation discussions.

Upon the arrival of Superintendent Gallagher, he provided an agenda and the MCI/SAD #53 Calendar MOU to all in attendance. He indicated that indeed the MOU needed to be reviewed since the concluding sections of the MOU were outdated. Mr. Hopkins then expressed concerns with the MOU and the difficulties that it presents for MCI. The most significant difficulties are about the need to have a set date for the last day of school at MCI re: travel planning for the international student population and finals schedule. However, the MOU under Length of Year indicates that, "MCI shall schedule a minimum of 178 school days during which at least 175 school days shall be planned as instructional days for students in grades 9-11, and at least 170 school days shall be planned as instructional days for students in grade 12." It was recognized that through an inadvertent omission the current MCI calendar doesn't have three additional days built in for inclement weather school cancellation days.

Mrs. Williams expressed building these days into the MCI calendar as a way to reasonably address the likelihood of inclement weather school cancellations and to set the end date based on this likelihood. The end of the year activities could then be scheduled backward from this end date. If there were more than three (3) cancellation days then the additional days would not need to be made up, but if there were less than, MCI could choose to have school in session or not.

Mr. Hopkins indicated that for MCI the number of one hundred seventy five (175) days was arbitrary and that the education value added that the students of the district received, was more important. Mr. Gallagher then asked Mr. Hopkins what he considered to be the

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set number of days that should be built into a calendar. Mr. Hopkins indicated that the beginning and end dates of the calendar should be the same as that of the district. Mr. Gallagher pointed out that the calendars in many other districts have cancellation days built into the calendar rather than days tacked on at the end of the year, as is designated on the district calendar in gray. He indicated that he too could build such as calendar and then simply not use the days if the one hundred seventy five (175) day student attendance requirement for the district was met. He also pointed out that the teacher collective bargaining agreement dictated the total number of days in a teacher's contract year which he had to follow.

Mr. Downs pointed out that there were two proposals on the table for discussion – an MCI calendar with 178 days built into it and one with 175 days without any contingency for inclement weather cancellation days.

Some discussion continued, however, no final decisions were reached. Mr. Gallagher and Mr. Hopkins will have additional dialogue about the school calendars prior to the next Advisory Committee meeting.

Being no further business the committee adjourned at 7:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael A. Gallagher