

October 24, 2008

This year's second meeting of the Superintendent's Parent Advisory Group took place last night at the Pearson Middle School Media Center. Approximately 20 people attended. The group determined that the **meeting scheduled for the 2008-2009** school year will be:

November 5, 2008
December 3, 2008
January 7, 2009
February 4, 2009
March 4, 2009
April 1, 2009
May 6, 2009
June 3, 2009

All meetings are scheduled to be held at **the Pearson Middle School Media Center** between **7 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.** **Any parent or staff member of the Winchester public school system is invited to attend.** Open discussion takes place around topics brought forward by attendees.

Topics that the group listed at last night's meeting are scheduled for discussion at subsequent meetings. These include:

The school calendar and vacation breaks
Transportation
 Pickup and drop-off points
 The impact of any potential reduction in the number of school buses contracted with First Student by the Board of Education
Kindergarten student transition and the start date for full day kindergarten
The student's schedule at Pearson Middle School
Realignment of the grade levels at Batcheller Elementary School and Hinsdale Elementary School
After school activities
Nature's Classroom and other field trips
Building maintenance and repairs
Subject and curriculum alignment and uniformity between the district's two elementary school buildings
Parity of enrichment and student recognition programs between the districts two elementary school buildings
Special Education programming including transitions for students between the elementary school and the middle school including outside placements
Items that should be considered as additions or deletions from the current school district budget as planning begins for the development of the 2009-2010 school year budget

At last night's meeting, following the establishment of the meeting schedule for the current school year and brain-storming the discussion topics that are listed above, dialogs centering on the possible realignment of the grade levels for Batcheller Elementary School and Hinsdale Elementary School and Transportation (pickup and drop-off points and the impact of any potential reduction in the number of school buses contracted with First Student by the Board of Education) was started. The conversations were thoughtful and many ideas both positive and negative were exchanged among the participants. Both of these topics are of high importance because they are currently under consideration and could have impact on necessary budget adjustments that may be required this year and on the development of a proposed budget for next year. Both of these topics have an impact on the families and children served by the district.

The Superintendent is looking forward to continued discussion on these two topics at the November meeting. We are also scheduled to begin discussion on items that should be considered for inclusion or exclusion as a budget proposal for the coming year is developed. Because the school district is in the process of applying for grant monies to fund our efforts to improve kindergarten transition, we will also begin discussion on that program.

If you would like to take part in these sessions, you are welcome to join us.