



Observer Reporting Form

Table with 4 columns: Feature Evaluated, Yes, No, Comments. Rows include: Meeting started on time?, All members present?, Members attentive?, Did members appear to have done their "homework?", Were members courteous to each other and the public?, Agenda sent/posted 72 hours before?, Agenda items clearly described what was to be discussed?, Adequate opportunity for public input?, Was there an appearance that some action items were discussed in closed rather than open session?, Was background information available to the public?, Facilities adequate? (room size, lighting, ventilation, speakers audible, accessible to handicapped)

Were any issues on the agenda relevant to LWV positions or programs?

Yes. The discussion of the Race to the Top funding application addressed the issue of merit pay for teachers, which implicates the League's policy on teacher compensation. Ms. Buttrees noted that the Tennessee Education Association has expressed concerns about teacher pay being 50% related to "teacher effectiveness" based on student academic growth as measured by standardized testing. However, the Knox County Education Association has signed on to the goals of the grant application. Superintendent McIntyre noted that the teacher pay objectives of the grant are consistent with the strategic plan for Knox County schools, which calls for "strategic compensation."

Also, the League may be concerned that the Governor has taken the extraordinary step of calling a special legislative session during a regular session in order to quickly adopt new statutes regarding teacher pay.

Do you recommend League action on any of these issues?

Continue to track the issue.

Other Concerns: No.

Observer: Stephanie D. Matheny

Meeting: Knox City Board of Education

Date: 1-4-2010

Notes:

- **Center for Educational Leadership**
 - This is a new partnership between Knox County schools and UT to provide pre-service training and in-service development for school principals and other school managers.
 - Funding has been provided through a private donation
 - The leadership academy will provide an intensive, 18-month program to train aspiring principals. It will combine theory and practice by including training by both practitioners and UT professors and by having its leadership students work at schools 4 days per week, and attend classes 1 day per week. The program will also take an interdisciplinary approach by having UT professors in other departments teach classes. Finally, the program will bring in national experts to address specific topics.
- **Transfer policy**
 - Ms. Kincannon proposed a policy to give a preference to siblings in determining which students can transfer to a school outside their zone. Some board members thought this policy would be unfair to other students, and some preferred to see it addressed procedurally. Ms. Kincannon withdrew the policy.
 - Ms. Buttrees expressed her concern that parents are confused between the regular school transfer process, which begins in the spring, and the No Child Left Behind transfer process, which begins in the summer or later.
- **School Calendar**
 - This item was moved to the February meeting to allow more time to address the appropriate time for spring break
- **Contracts –**
 - Ms. Kincannon asked about whether food contracts accounted for quality of food. She was told that the contracts impose minimal requirements based on USDA standards.
 - The Board proposes to approve new contracts with Coca Cola and Pepsi for soft drink machines in all schools, thus standardizing the financial arrangements and accounting for all schools. Ms. Kincannon noted that this provides an opportunity to later evaluate whether the financial benefit of having the machines outweighs the cost of providing beverages of dubious nutritional content.