

## BOARD BRIEF

Date: May 10, 2019

For ACTION \_\_\_\_\_

For INFORMATION X\_\_\_\_\_

Board Agenda: Yes \_\_\_

No X\_\_\_

**FROM:** Betty E. Hobbs, Ed.D., Acting Chief Human Resources Officer

**THROUGH:** Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools  
MScott Berkowitz, Principal Jefferson-Houston PreK-8 IB School

**TO:** The Honorable Cindy Anderson, Chair, and  
Members of the Alexandria City School Board

**TOPIC:** Jefferson-Houston PreK-8 International Baccalaureate School (J-H)  
Stay Interviews

### BACKGROUND

The persistently high teacher turn-over that Jefferson-Houston has experienced over the years requires intentional steps to ensure that we recruit, maintain, and support the excellent staff that the students deserve. The purpose of the Stay Interviews was to demonstrate the division's commitment to each teacher remaining at J-H for the 2019-2020 school year, while also being very clear about the expectations for success.

### SUMMARY

On April 11, April 12 and May 3, 2019, a team led by Dr. Hutchings conduct one-on-one Stay Interviews with 40 teachers who will remain at J-H for the 2019-2020 school year. Items for discussion included why teachers choose to remain at J-H; areas teachers would like to enhance through professional development; a common school-wide focus for students; and expectations for the 2019-2020 school year.

Questions asked during the Stay Interviews and information on Professional Development were forwarded to teachers before the interviews so they would know ahead of time the questions that would be asked of them during the interviews. The Stay Interview team included:

- Mr. MScott Berkowitz, Principal at J-H
- Dr. Gregory Hutchings, Superintendent
- Dr. Lisa Piehota, Executive Director, Elementary Instruction
- Dr. Gerald Mann, Executive Director, Secondary Instruction
- Ms. Dawn Lucas, EAA President
- Dr. Betty Hobbs, Acting Chief Human Resources Officer

A consistent format, as listed below, was followed during the interviews.

- Mr. Berkowitz shared the purpose of the Stay Interviews.
- Dr. Hobbs stated that we were taking notes so we could recall the ideas shared by teachers; Stay Interviews would be conducted throughout the division later, but more

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than likely in a different format; we invited Dawn Lucas, EAA President, to join us so everyone could see that we are a team supporting J-H; and that Dr. Hutchings authorized teachers participating in the 3-day professional development session this summer to be paid their 2019-20 daily rate of pay.

- Dr. Hutchings thanked teachers for their service at J-H and for the feedback they would provide.
- Dr. Hobbs asked the questions.
- Mr. Berkowitz discussed the teacher training (professional development) information.
- Dr. Hutchings again thanked teachers for their feedback and support.

The teacher responses from the Stay Interviews focused on team building, enhancing the instructional program, heightening expectations, and a shared goal to ensure that all students succeed. Generally, teachers shared that they stay at J-H because of the students and relationships with their colleagues. Areas to enhance through professional development included communication, consistency in procedures and expectations, strengthening the community concept within the school and team building. It was shared that the student population would benefit from more clarity around expectations, consistency, enhancing the IB focus, and the areas identified for professional development during teacher training this summer.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review the information provided in the brief.

**ATTACHMENT:** 190510\_J-H\_Prek-8\_IB-School Stay\_Interviews

### **CONTACTS**

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