

# Chalkboard

By

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Last week I gave you an insider's look at my job evaluation by the board. I am not sure if anybody reads the Chalkboard because people keep saying to me, "Hey, I heard you were leaving....".

This column, in my never-ending quest to have you, the reader, feel a part of our school, will be devoted to an e-mail letter of apology that I sent to our school district's Personnel Policies Committee. Sometimes a person has to admit when he or she has erred.

In case you do not know, the PPC's chief duty, by Arkansas Code Annotated 6-17-205, is to "... develop a calendar of meetings throughout the year to review the district's personnel policies in order to determine whether additional policies or amendments to existing policies are needed and to review any proposed distribution of a salary underpayment from previous years." They have other duties but policy review is at the top of the list. I note this only because it will help the following to make sense."

"Dear PPC Members:

After visiting with the administrative representatives on the PPC and later with Ms. Duncan, I believe an apology is in order on my part. I have not been as "rows and columns" as in past years in the process of getting policies proposed for revision. I made some assumptions on things I thought were mutually understood when instead I should have made personal contact. I promise to rectify that.

Yesterday I gave Ms. Duncan a copy of the policies that will be considered for a "Second Reading" next Wednesday night, May 9, 2007. I made her a copy of each for each of you and I am sure she will get them to you today if she has not already.

I also made her a single copy of the policies that are being proposed as a "first reading" and I have attached those to this e-mail. Note that I have addressed one of what my representatives believed was a PPC concern in Number 7 of GAB "Proposals..."

Let me make a comment on the FY 08 calendar issue, which seems to be a “hot topic”. The reason I proposed an alternate calendar is only because I am concerned that the PPC calendar has the effect of moving one (1) week of instruction until after the state exams. If we also had a week of being out for snow in January or February then loss of teacher-student interaction time might negatively affect our test performance. Personally I would love to have more time off at Christmas; professionally I think it’s not best for our district.

I guess the only other thing I want to address in this e-mail is that I was told that some of you might not think I value teacher’s opinions or might not value the PPC as an entity. While I have no idea if that was an individual or group feeling, I want you to know that is not the case. My creed, “Perception is Reality” allows me to understand why you might have felt that way because, for whatever reason, I have not made enough effort to seek you out personally and to communicate orally with you. As the kids used to say, “My Bad”.

You guys have not asked me to come to any of your meetings. Let me extend to you my willingness to come talk about any problem, concern, issue and etc. Other than things said in “Executive Sessions”, personnel issues, some types of student issues, and private one-to-one conversations, my professional life is pretty much an open book.

Outside the PPC realm, let me also share my willingness to talk one-on-one with you.

I have a joke with the Central Office employees. I have had to say, “If I hurt your feelings I want it to be because I meant to and not accidentally.” Let me say that, in the same manner, to you. Let me say “Sorry, I haven’t intended to make anyone feel upset, devalued, or anything else”.

Let me close [this letter] with this quote from an article in the today's Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette [Tax funds due soon at schools](#). [NWA Section B: May 5, 2007] I know the guy who said it and he occasionally has a good thought- "I think we've reached a point where it's not just good enough to do a good job anymore. People have to know you are doing a good job, and sometimes we have to talk to each other to know that."