**T. Clay Wood AC and PTO School Council Meeting – May 15, 2025:**

• **Welcome & Introductions**:  
Lindy Mannion, the outgoing AC president, opened the meeting and introduced the incoming president.

• **Approval of Previous Minutes**:  
The minutes from the April 2025 meeting were approved by Julia White and Ms. Hanover.

• **Student Update (Alice)**:  
• Last week was Teacher Appreciation Week; thank-you cards were distributed.  
• Leadership team applications were due last Friday.  
• Interviews for the Lighthouse Leadership Team took place today, and decisions will be made tomorrow.

• **Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) – Presented by Mr. Johnson**:  
Mr. Johnson, the administrator intern, discussed the school’s CIP, which focuses on:  
1. **Learning and Achievement**: Emphasis on the Virginia Literacy Act; professional development for teachers; adoption of new instructional materials (HMH, UFLI).  
2. **Positive Climate and Culture**  
3. **Family and Community Engagement**  
Monitoring of instructional quality is done via classroom observations  
4. **Instruction & Learning**:  
• **High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM)**:  
• 100% of classroom observations showed teachers and students using HQIM.  
• In ~60% of observed lessons, students were actively engaged (working) at least 50% of the time, indicating improved student participation over teacher talk time.  
• **Academic Goals & Progress Monitoring**:  
• Goal: 85% proficiency on year-end Reading SOLs; current rate is ~75% with some makeups and retakes still pending.  
• HMH unit assessments aimed for 75% mastery; current average is in the low-to-mid 60% range.  
• Reading specialists support teachers via weekly collaborative team meetings and classroom coaching on using HQIM effectively (e.g., HMH and UFLI).  
5. **Positive Climate & Culture**

• **Attendance Initiatives**:  
• Target absentee rate: ≤5% (95% daily attendance); goal has been met.  
• Chronic absenteeism (missing 18+ days): 40 students (~7%) as of May 9.  
• Efforts include counselor-led incentives, positive school climate efforts, and weekly Attendance Committee meetings to review students with 10–15+ absences.  
• Conferences are held with families at 10 absences to emphasize the academic impact; at 15, an interagency meeting is held, involving district attendance officers and potentially triggering legal consequences.  
• Automated district system notifies parents after specific absence thresholds, bypassing manual school contact.  
  
**3. Family & Community Engagement:**  
(Note: This section was just beginning in the notes; more detail may follow in future meeting segments.)

• The school achieved **20 out of 20 indicators** for a high-functioning Advisory Council, as defined by a district initiative. The final indicator added midyear was **offering translation services** to families.  
• These indicators were based on state and district priorities to ensure Advisory Councils are active and effective.  
• The current Advisory Council structure has been strong, with good alignment to expectations, and a new **Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP)** will be developed by **end of June**, with updates shared in **September**.  
  
**Reflections & Feedback (End-of-Year Wrap-Up)**  
Participants were asked to reflect on:  
1. **What worked well**  
2. **What didn’t work well**  
3. **What could be improved**  
4. **Ideas for guest speakers next year**  
  
**Key Feedback:**  
• **What Worked Well:**  
• Combining PTO and Advisory Council into one meeting created a “one-stop shop” for busy parents.  
• Zoom meetings were convenient for parents with busy schedules.  
• **What Didn’t Work/Needs Improvement:**  
• Zoom meetings felt **less personal**; engagement was lower due to cameras off and multitasking.  
• **Limited community involvement**, despite high turnout at school events like Bingo Night, many parents don’t realize Advisory Council members represent specific neighborhoods.

• **Suggestions for Improvement:**  
• **Neighborhood introductions**: Use back-to-school night to introduce Advisory Council reps via short video clips.  
• **In-person meetings**: Hold 2–3 in-person meetings per year for deeper connection.  
• **Later meeting times**: Consider moving meetings to 7:00 PM to better fit family schedules.  
• **Clearer roles & responsibilities**: Assign **specific projects or small tasks** to members to boost participation.  
• **Parent engagement challenge**: Encourage members to invite neighbors or post in community groups.  
• **Topic-based parent nights**: Bring in school counselors or other experts to discuss relevant issues like mental health or SOL prep.  
• **Ideas for Guest Speakers:**  
• School counselors on mental health, test prep, and other timely topics.  
• Local officials or specialists related to education and family well-being.

**Advisory Council Engagement and Communication**  
• **Neighborhood Reps’ Role:** Members should actively gather input from families in their neighborhoods, acting as a “sounding board” for questions or concerns to bring to meetings.  
• **In-Classroom Introductions:** One rep introduced herself at Back-to-School Night to raise awareness about the Advisory Council and invite parent input.  
  
**In-Person vs. Zoom Meetings**  
• **Zoom Benefits:** Convenient for both parents and staff, especially after work hours.  
• **Zoom Drawbacks:** Less personal; limits connection and engagement.  
• **Suggested Hybrid Approach:** Consider increasing the number of in-person meetings (possibly three per year) while retaining Zoom for accessibility.  
  
**Suggestions for Improved Communication**  
• **Advance Notice for Events:** Parents request earlier communication (more than a few weeks in advance) for school events like concerts and gifted nights.  
• **Website Enhancements:** Post PTO goals and contact info on the school website.  
• **Improved Newsletters:** Suggest using clickable hyperlinks for easier navigation of topics (e.g., attendance, upcoming events).  
• **Short Informational Videos or Audio Summaries:** Consider brief updates or “audio newsletters” summarizing Advisory Council and PTO activities—useful for busy parents.  
  
**Ideas for Increased Engagement**  
• **Neighborhood Outreach Challenges:** Each rep could invite 5 parents to the next meeting or post reminders in local community groups (e.g., Facebook, Nextdoor).  
• **Special Projects for Members:** Assign small, specific tasks to members to boost involvement.  
• **Back-to-School Video Intros:** Record short video introductions of Advisory Council members to be shared online or via newsletter (instead of during the live event).

**Teacher Appreciation Week Recap**  
• Week filled with catered breakfast, lunch, specialty drinks, etc.   
• Staff were very happy; PTO welcomes additional feedback (public or private).  
  
**Upcoming PTO Events**  
• **Chuck E. Cheese Spirit Night:** Scheduled for this Friday; Chuck E. will visit the school in the afternoon. Advanced notice was emphasized due to past low participation.  
• **Cold Stone “Teacher Scoop” Night (End of May):** Volunteers needed for three time slots. Staff encouraged to sign up.  
  
**Budget and Fundraising Updates**  
• Current PTO bank balance: **$33,989** (up from $21,000 at start of year).  
• Major spending:  
• **$3,200** on Teacher Appreciation Week.  
• **$20,800** on teacher gift cards (funded largely by Boosterthon earnings).  
• Leftover principal-requested funds were reallocated to gifts for teachers.  
• Major fundraiser: **Boosterthon raised $29,000**.  
• **Spring SEP fundraiser** underperformed due to using a private company.  
• **Bingo nights** were very successful and could be expanded next year.  
• **Spring Paper Fundraiser** not held this year but suggested for March 2026.  
  
**Spirit Wear and Yearbook**  
• New spirit wear store is live with 20% off until end of May.  
• Yearbook is nearly complete and will be distributed at school before year’s end.  
  
**Next Year Planning**  
• PTO is starting to plan 2025 events and budget.  
• Request made to get on Dr. B’s calendar for coordination.  
• Spirit nights and fundraiser goals are being finalized early.  
  
**Supply Kits**  
• Production is underway; marketing materials will be distributed soon.  
  
**Proposed New Event: Family Dance Proposal Discussion**  
• **Event Concept:** A *family-inclusive dance* (not a drop-off event), likened to bingo night.  
  
**Superintendent’s Advisory Council**  
• Addressing **student behavior policies**.  
• Reviewing **Code of Behavior** and discussing updates with the school board.  
  
**Principal’s Updates (Dr. B)**  
• **Attendance Reporting:** Official absences tracked; patterns of excessive tardies/early dismissals are also monitored and followed up on.  
• **Important Dates:**  
- **May 16:** PTO Chuck E. Cheese Spirit Night  
- **May 22:** 2pm High School Senior Walk (smaller group expected)

**-May 26**: Memorial Day – No school  
-**May 30:** Field Day & Cold Stone Spirit Night (Staff Scoop)  
- **June 4:** Strings Concert 6:30 pm

-J**une 9:** Hooray for K 5:30 pm

- **June 10:** Read-Out Picnic (modified due to lunch regulations)  
- **June 11:** 5th Grade Promotion at 6 PM  
- **June 12:** Last Day of School (half-day)  
- **August 18:** First Day of School (2025–26 year)

• **Guest Speakers Planned:** **November:** Marisa Miranda (Virginia Literacy Act & reading assessments).  
• Future: Potential presentations from school counselors and testing coordinators.  
• Dr. B invited suggestions for additional topics or speakers.

**Meeting Format Discussion**  
• The group agreed to **start the year with the proposed meeting schedule** (three in-person, others via Zoom).  
• Open to **revisiting the format at the September 4th meeting** if adjustments are needed.  
• Flexibility to switch Zoom meetings to in-person later in the year.  
  
**Advisory Council Info**  
• **Council contact details** (names, emails, etc.) will be published on the school’s website under the Advisory Council tab.  
• Members were asked to **confirm or correct their email info** (sent via email earlier) if needed.  
  
**Principal Updates (Dr. B)**  
• Encouraged **new members** to consider submitting short intro videos over the summer (e.g., who they are, which neighborhood they represent).  
• Confirmed that the **June 12th half day** is for **all students**, not just elementary.  
  
**Closing Remarks**  
• Multiple team members expressed thanks and appreciation for the collaboration.  
• Everyone wished each other well going into the summer and next school year.  
  
**Guest Speaker Ideas**  
• **School Counselors:** Talk about mental health, SOL prep, or timely parent-related topics.  
• **Education Experts:** Address changes in testing, student growth tracking, or new state policies.  
  
**Standardized Testing Discussion**  
• New state assessments and accountability changes may impact elementary students in the coming years.  
• Some concerns exist among staff and leadership about over-testing and the alignment of current assessments with actual student performance.  
  
**PTO Updates & Feedback**  
• PTO is actively planning next year’s budget and programs.  
• Feedback from this discussion will guide future events and priorities.  
• A possible **PTO survey** may be conducted to gather more structured feedback from families.  
• **Teacher Appreciation Week Recap:** Included themed meals and treats each day, organized by PTO board