

Common Planning Time Proposal

School Committee Meeting 2/27/2023



Joint Study Team Members



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Background/Context

The objective of the Joint Study Team was to craft a recommendation to restructure early release Wednesdays, enabling consistent Teacher Common Planning Time.

- From the Signed SEU Unit A 2022-2025 MOA: *ARTICLE XLIV: JOINT STUDIES AND JOINT COMMITMENTS*

D: A joint study between the district and the SEU will develop a plan to restructure early release Wednesdays to enable additional and consistent Common Planning Time at the PreK-8 schools. The joint study will report their recommendation by January 31st 2023.



Background/Context



- The Joint Study Team met six times from November - February
- The Joint Study Team presented to the Education Programs Subcommittee on 1/23/2023 to receive feedback on the initial proposal
 - Today's presentation will incorporate some changes to the original proposal based on feedback



Vision

To develop a consistent, structured time for planning and educator collaboration across all grades, departments and schools during contractual hours (early release Wednesdays) that will lead to the improvement of lesson quality, instructional effectiveness, co-teaching practices, and student achievement.



Vision & Rationale

Time for teacher learning, planning critical for school reform

Ellen G. Moritt
December 1, 2016



Students aren't the only ones who need more time to learn; teachers also need more and better time for learning and for planning.

Teachers accomplish so many important things with such little time. They teach several subjects or courses each day, review student work, plan differentiated lessons to meet the needs of diverse learners in their classroom, and strategize with parents and specialists about how to support individual students.

Teaching is a full immersion experience. When teachers are at school, most of their time is spent face-to-face with students, simultaneously playing the roles of instructor, counselor, coach and nurse. As a group, they have big hearts and are selfless in their efforts to teach and care for their students. But a productive day of teaching requires substantial planning time to choose effective strategies, design lessons, prepare materials and collaborate with others. Any good teacher will tell you this, and they

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The Gift of Teacher Time

Making teachers' time a valued resource in your school

By Jill Anderson
POSTED: September 17, 2019

What Research Says **Vincent A. Anfaru, Jr.**

Common Planning Time

Steven B. Martens, Nancy Flowers, Vincent A. Anfaru, Jr., & Micki M. Caskey

All the key documents explicating the essential features of effective middle-level schools highlight the importance of organizational structures that foster teaching, learning, and meaningful relationships. *This We Believe: Keys to Educating Young Adolescents* (National Middle School Association, 2009) identifies interdisciplinary teams as one of these organizational features and reminds us that these teams need "daily or regular common planning time" as they "can plan ways to integrate the curriculum, analyze assessment data, examine student work, discuss current research, and reflect on the effectiveness of instructional approaches being used" (p. 32). Teachers also use common planning time to address management issues related to individual student and parent concerns, the day-to-day management of the team, and scheduling of activities.

Doing What Works: Proven Practices for the 21st Century (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1999) also addressed the need for teachers to have greater authority to make decisions that affect the educational experiences of their students. The Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development noted:

Teachers on teams should exercise creative control over how curricular goals are to be reached by their teams. Teachers should collectively allocate budget and space for their teams, choose instructional methods and materials for classroom use, identify and develop interdisciplinary curricular themes,

The Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development further stated:

Teachers need time to form themselves into smoothly functioning teams. . . . They need time to explore ideas, talk about students for whom they share responsibility, discuss the consequences to other teachers, and seek counsel from colleagues on solving problems. (p. 55)

Following the recommendations in these key reports, many middle-level schools are organized into interdisciplinary teams that use a common planning time or a combination of both common planning time and individual planning for team members. While the intent of individual planning time may be obvious, it is important to have a clear definition of common planning time for the purpose of this column. Kellough and Kellough (2008) defined common planning time as "A regularly scheduled time during the school day when teachers who teach the same students meet to joint-plan, prepare, coordinate, materials, preparation, and student evaluation" (p. 394). Also important is a common meeting for an interdisciplinary team. Again, from Kellough and Kellough, an interdisciplinary team is an organizational pattern of two or more teachers representing different core curriculum areas such as science, mathematics, language arts, and social studies. Frequently, teachers from the related arts and specialty

Teacher Learning: What Matters?

Research shows how schools can create more powerful professional development experiences.

Links: Getting Started and Mike Robertson

High-Quality Professional Development & New Evidence

Case: Career as Student Learning

Case: Negotiating with School Experience

Research shows how schools can create more powerful professional development experiences. Links: Getting Started and Mike Robertson. High-Quality Professional Development & New Evidence. Case: Career as Student Learning. Case: Negotiating with School Experience.

COMMON PLANNING TIME

LAST UPDATED: 10.08.13

In schools, common planning time refers to any period of time that is scheduled during the school day for multiple teachers, or teams of teachers, to work together.

In most cases, common planning time is considered to be a form of **professional development** since its primary purpose is to bring teachers together to learn from one another and collaborate on projects that will lead to improvements in lesson quality, instructional effectiveness, and student achievement. Generally speaking, these improvements result from (1) the improved coordination and communication that occurs among teachers who meet and talk regularly, (2) the learning, insights, and constructive feedback that occur during professional discussions among teachers, and (3) the lessons, units, materials, and resources that are created or improved when teachers work on them collaboratively. While common planning time may be used for other purposes in some schools and situations—for example, staff members may use the time to coordinate an academic program or school-improvement initiative—the term is predominately associated with teaching-related planning and work.



A decorative graphic consisting of a horizontal line of seven colored circles (yellow, orange, red, purple, blue, green, grey) connected by thin lines, positioned to the left of the section header.

Vision & Rationale

Based on evidence-based research, the benefits of common planning time include:

- Aligns assessments, lessons, and learning materials across grade levels;
- Allows for more accessible and equitable exchange of ideas and opportunities to diversify teaching strategies; additional entry points to make learning experiences more accessible and equitable for all students;
- Fosters a sense of collegiality and positive staff morale;
- Increases communication and collaboration between departments, educators, and support staff; staff are better equipped to identify student needs and provide appropriate supports (academic and social-emotional) in a timely manner;
- Offers an additional layer of coaching and mentorship to novice teachers; and
- Utilizes data to analyze student and class progress and make adjustments to strengthen instruction

Thoughts from the Joint Study Team:

Why do educators need Common Planning Time and what will it enable us to do as a district?

- Avoid “silo” effect (both individual & school)
- Choice PD is not the pathway to CPT
- Input of SpEd and MLE educators would be integrated in the Tier I instruction through their collaboration
- Better for student achievement: enhanced curriculum
- Connections across the departments
- Consistent / coherent student experience in SPS (vertical and horizontal)
- Time and opportunity to share expertise
- Prepare students for SHS transition
- Best done when students aren't in building
- There's clear consensus on the need

Why CPT at SPS?

- Avoid "silo" effect ; ^{new teacher} ^{community building}
- choice PD can't be the only way
- build community + boosts "belonging"
+ morale.

- Support staff can
- better for student
but also all
- to help SPS
- not everyone is
lead at SPS
- Special Population
getting lead
- SST or MTSS
needs to be wh
~~consistent~~ consistent

WHY?

- need of coordination w/prof. staff
- connections across depts.
- collaboration
- time and opportunity to share knowledge and expertise that translates into student support
- need for coherent student experience.
- consistency → ↑
* Yes, given the time constraints length of day, (not depending on subs).





Vision & Rationale



Thoughts from the field:

- **Caitlin Donaldson**, Kindergarten Teacher, Winter Hill
- **Alex Hershey**, ELA Coach, East Somerville and Argenziano
- **Kathy Kumar**, PreK Paraprofessional, Capuano
- **Glenda Soto**, Principal, Argenziano School



The Joint Study Team's Proposal

	Current Schedule	Recommendation <i><u>*For Pre-K -8 to be implemented</u></i> <i><u>SY 2024 - 2025*</u></i>
Days & Times	13 Wednesdays 12:00 - 2:45 p.m.	36 Wednesdays 1:00 - 2:45 pm
School Year Instructional Hours	937.5	927 (1.1% reduction)
Common Planning Time	0 hours / year	27.5 hours / year
Breakdown / Cycle of each Post-Dismissal Wednesday	<u>13 Wednesdays:</u> All Individual Planning Time	<u>36 Wednesdays Divided:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 12 Individual Planning Afternoons■ 10 School Team CPT Afternoons■ 10 Across-District Team CPT Afternoons■ 4 District PD Afternoons



The Joint Study Team's Proposal



- Every Wednesday is a 1:00 pm dismissal
- Shift in instructional start time to 8:20am
- 1.1% decrease of instructional time
- Incorporates individual, school-based, and district wide planning time.
- **Change in schedule would be for SY 2024 - 2025**
 - SY 2023- 2024 would be a planning year



The Joint Study Team's Proposal

Activities would occur during common planning time:

- Discuss samples of student work; share observations that demonstrate mastery and suggestions for how lessons might be modified to further learning;
- Engage in curriculum planning by content area and grade level; audit lesson plans to identify alignment to standards and develop interdisciplinary units;
- Identify academic and social emotional interventions for students in need of additional support;
- Review student data (individual and class) to identify trends and patterns;
- Share ideas, best practices, and feedback related to assignments, lessons, and resources;
- Streamline communication between teachers, student services team, school administrators, and district staff



Other Districts Comparison

	K-8 School Year Instructional Hours	Common Planning Time on Early Release Days
Somerville Proposal	927	27.5
Arlington	~930	54 hours of release time. 25 of those hours are for common planning time.
Chelsea	940	4 Early release days for district wide PD. 0 for common planning time.
Lexington	898	N/A - 36 hours of early release day planning time not specified into Individual or Common Planning Time
Norwood	935	
Quabbin	939 10 mins.	10 early release days and 10 extended days in which educators stay late for common planning time.
Waltham	900-910	2 early release days for family conferences. Common planning time during the school day once per week.



How will we know it's “working?”

By implementing our CPT proposal, we expect to see:

- Increase in formative and summative assessment data
- More inclusive practices across departments (General Education, Special Education, Multilingual Learners)
- More effective, data-driven instructional practices
- Better implementation of core curriculum
- More Educator leadership opportunities
- Educator Perspective



Additional Considerations

- Implications on child-care and transportation
 - *We are discussing with Community Schools and other out of school time providers on this.*
- Perception of learning loss; less hours in the classroom
 - *We believe the investment of CPT will yield a higher quality learning experience for students.*
- Quantitative data that demonstrates a direct correlation between common planning and academic achievement
 - *We believe that CPT will yield academic achievement as measured by formative and summative assessments*

Thank You

Questions and Comments?