

High School PLC Parent Letter: May 7, 2018

Dear High School Parents -

In recent years, research has shown that one of the most powerful ways to foster teacher dialogue, enhance professional development, and increase student success is by establishing Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Professional Learning Communities, or PLCs, are teams of teachers from like grade level or content areas meeting regularly as collaborative teams to analyze student learning and discuss best practice for the purpose of improving student outcomes.

In order to provide teachers with the time they need to work collaboratively, a group of administrators, grade-level teachers, and I worked together to find time in the current day for teacher collaboration. Our work resulted in schedule modifications at the elementary and high school level.

Dr. Richard Dewey, a scheduling expert who worked with Council Rock School District notes that, “finding time for PLCs, requires trade-offs.” At the high school level, the CR PLC scheduling team had to think creatively about tradeoffs. Ultimately, they saw value in starting the school day later on specific dates and holding full day sessions on select days originally scheduled for early dismissal. These schedule modifications will enable teachers to meet approximately three times a month, with one of those times occurring during the late arrival window. It is important to know that we still have sufficient amount of instructional minutes in each course, even with eight 45-minute late arrival days factored into the annual schedule.

The following eight late arrival days will be implemented for the 2018-2019 school year:

- September 24
- October 22
- December 3
- January 7
- February 4
- March 4
- April 1
- June 3

On the late arrival days, buses will run a normal schedule. Students may arrive to school at regular time or 45-minutes later than the regular daily start time if they can arrange transportation. Administrative staff will supervise students who opt to arrive at regular time.

In regards to the two eliminated early dismissal days, 9-12 grade students will dismiss at regular time on the below dates for the 2018-2019 school year, while their K-8 counterparts follow an early dismissal schedule:

- October 10
- March 8

My team and I are planning to closely analyze the high school schedule during the 2018-2019 school year to find time for student intervention and enrichment. Our district's goal is to embed a true intervention and enrichment period into our high school day so all students have access to either academic support or advanced learning opportunities.

I invite you to review the attached FAQ to learn more about PLCs. As Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, I fully support teacher collaboration and student intervention/enrichment time and am excited for Council Rock to become a leader in these areas, starting with the above schedule adjustment at the high school level in 2018-2019.

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Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning