Memo

To: Brian Balke

From: Planning Time Evaluation Committee

Date: February 13, 2020

Re: Committee Recommendations

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Mr. Balke,

The Planning Time Evaluation Committee is pleased to inform you that we have completed our work regarding planning time for professional staff in the Goffstown School District. As per your request in your September 9, 2019 memo, we gathered data and evaluated the current state of planning time within the district as well as researched planning time in public schools throughout New Hampshire. Each requested outcome is addressed below along with the committee’s recommendations for the School Board and GEA leadership to consider.

* Identify current planning time Available for all professional staff by school/level:

Glen Lake: Currently, teacher prep time is between AM & PM ½ day classes. Teacher lunch is also during this time

 Kindergarten: 23-minute prep period 5 times/week

 Pre-school: 23-minute prep period 5 times/week plus, all day Fridays (which is usually used for meetings and other administrative activities)

 Special Educators & Student Service Providers: 23-minute prep period 5

 times/week

Maple Ave:

 Classroom Teachers: 40 minutes 3 times/week

 Specials/Unified Arts: 60 minutes 5 times/week

 Special Educators & Students Service Providers: 30 minutes 3-5 times/week

Bartlett Elementary: Due to the amount of part time staff at Bartlett, the following times are not always available and should be considered approximations.

 Classroom Teachers: 40 minutes 3 times/week

 Specials/Unified Arts: 30 minutes 2-3 times/week

 Special Educators & Students Service Providers: no set time is provided

The committee discovered during its work and especially on the elementary level, that special education teachers (and occasionally others as well) often go without a lunch period as well as not having a planning period in their day. This is especially true at Bartlett which employs a large number of part time staff. However, it is the committee’s understanding that Bartlett has been attempting to develop a revised class schedule that will address this issue and open up more time for planning periods.

MVMS:

 Classroom Teachers: 55 minutes 5 times/week Plus, 55 minutes 2 times/week (during student music classes)

 Specials/Unified Arts: 43 minutes 5 times/week

 Special Educators & Students Service Providers: 55 minutes 5/week Plus, 55 minutes 2 times/week (during student music classes)

GHS:

 All professional staff 450 minutes/week. This could be a 90-minute block or two 45-minute blocks (90 minutes split over 2 days)

It must be noted that none of the planning periods at the district’s five schools are guaranteed and that each school addresses teacher prep periods differently. At any given school within the district, professional staff are often asked to attending parent and administrative meetings or to cover a class in the case of a teacher absence when no substitute is available. In addition, special educators and other service providers must often re-arrange or change an existing schedule in order to adjust and comply with student’s services as dictated in an I.E.P., to perform requested testing and or to provide crisis intervention or assistance. All of which result in the loss of teachers’ prep periods. Finally, special education and other service providers have students added to their case load throughout the year. This greatly impacts scheduled planning periods.

* Develop recommendations with respect to planning time for all professional staff by school/level:
* Consider impact on school schedule and ability to provide planning time for professional staff

It should be noted that the following recommendations are in addition to Article XI, Sect. D of the bargaining agreement which states *Each professional employee is entitled to a duty-free lunch period equivalent in time to a scheduled student’s lunch period in his/her building.*

Glen Lake:

 *All professional staff will have a minimum of 40 minutes of uninterrupted, unencumbered planning time daily.*

Elementary Schools and MVMS:

 *All professional staff will have a minimum of one uninterrupted, unencumbered planning period equivalent in time to a student’s special or U.A. period scheduled into their daily schedule*.

GHS:

 *All professional staff will have no less than 45 minutes of uninterrupted, unencumbered planning time daily.*

* Develop recommendations for the School Board and GEA leadership to consider during the next round of contract negotiations:

It is believed that the previous recommendations would have little to no impact on the district’s current school schedules and its ability to provide an adequate planning period for all professional staff. However, the following, school specific adjustments should be considered.

1. It is recommended that planning time at Glen Lake be scheduled in between the morning and afternoon sessions. To achieve this, it is recommended that the scheduled start time be changed from its current time of 8:45 to 8:30 and the morning program’s end time be changed from 11:15 to 11:00. Teachers at Glen Lake report that currently, most students have already arrived by 8:30 and dismissal ends by 11:15. This change would given teachers an uninterrupted planning and lunch time that should have little to no effect on the current bus schedule. By changing the mid-day pickup to 11 this resolves all preschool/ kindergarten planning issues as well. There would be no need to change the afternoon start/stop times.

2. Elementary level teachers have requested that a least one weekly planning period be made available that will allow all teachers on a specific grade level to have a common planning time. This should be addressed at the building level.