

**Subject:** Collaboration Task Force Update

**Date:** Friday, May 3, 2019 at 7:11:56 AM Mountain Daylight Time

**From:** Kelly McGovern

Hello Sweetwater #1 Staff,

Good morning and welcome to Friday!

Below is an update of the Collaboration Task Force process and the meeting that occurred on Wednesday, April 17, 2019. The next steps for the District are included in the bottom portion of the email.

Attached are all of the documents provided at the meeting with a description and are noted in *italics*. As you may recall in the *District email on Collaboration Task Force 4-12-19*, the Task Force group was composed of the building Principal and one Teacher representative from each school. Other academic Directors also attended the meeting. The Farson staff were unable to attend due to Mrs. Rezzonico and some of the teachers being out of the District at a training in Atlanta. The Task Force was **not** a decision-making group but a brainstorming group generating options to increase collaboration time within the current traditional calendar. We heard the concerns from our staff. There were 25 school days left in the year from the date the Task Force meeting was held.

As part of the background knowledge for the participants, the *Collaboration Task Force* document initiated the conversation and provided the purpose and vision of the Task Force. The following info was also provided:

- *Current School Start and End Times 18-19*
- *Task Force Facts* including feedback from stakeholders, staff needs, and parameters for brainstorming ideas
- *Collaboration Task Force email 1 4-16-19* was sent to the group the evening prior. It contains a link to an article noting many other districts and schools are taking a closer look at their daily schedules. We are not alone. It was stated to the group that the article was not meant to steer any direction, but rather to get our ideas ready to work together.
- *School Schedules.zip* was emailed to the group at the start of the meeting and contained all of the current bell schedules.
- **It was important to discuss the process the District went through the previous school year when school start and end times were adjusted.** To accurately preface the context of the situation at that time, transportation funding was frozen with the three year average in transportation costs serving as the reimbursement amount from the State. This created a large funding gap from one year to the next. In town bus routes were also staggered between schools leaving gaps in driving time used inefficiently and were not cost effective. Hence, school start and end times were reviewed, adjusted, and approved by the Board in the June 2018 meeting. *Start and end times presented in 17-18 for 18-19* included the several options that were considered. They included:
  - Option 1: earlier elementary start time and later secondary start time (The research on the benefits of a later start time for secondary students was provided to stakeholders.)
  - Option 2: length of the elementary and secondary school day is the same (The length of the staff contract day for in town schools were the same for both elementary and secondary.)
  - Option 3: shorter elementary day and longer secondary day
  - Option 4: longer elementary day and shorter secondary day

- Option 5: length of the elementary and secondary school day is the same (shorter instructional day than option 2) The length of the staff contract day for in town schools were the same for both elementary and secondary.
- Option 6: length of the elementary and secondary school day is the same (same length as option 5 but start and end times vary by 10 minutes) The length of the staff contract day for in town schools were the same for both elementary and secondary.

*McGovern Top 2 Options School start & end times survey (please read & vote AGAIN) 5-22-18* listed the outcomes from the staff vote. Options 5 & 6 were close so a second vote occurred.

*McGovern Final survey result School start & end times 5-24-18* provided the final staff vote that was recommended to the Trustees (350 staff members voted).

This process ranged well over a two month span with all of these events occurring as part of the process prior to Board Action: 1 Board Workshop, 2 Administrative Leadership Team meetings, 3 Transportation Department meetings, 3 Calendar sub-Committee meetings, each Principal shared information with their respective staff at 14 schools, 4 District-wide emails to staff, 2 press releases to all media outlets, 3 SchoolWay pushes, District email account opened for 14 days to gather public feedback, CAB staff met with all 14 schools and 2 departments, 3 public forums, 1 RSHS staff survey from their Admins for input only into start and end times with secondary having a later start time, 2 District staff surveys, 4 District Facebook posts, and 2 District website updates.

- *CollaborationTaskForce 4-17-19 Minutes* outlines the ideas brainstormed from each of the 10 participating teams. As you will see, the ideas fall into three categories: change school start and end times; or provide early releases for schools on select days; or re-image the daily schedule for a school (moving from a 7 to a 6 day rotation for elementary specials; or restructure the special times during the school day to allow for collaboration time listed by team 5 in the *Minutes*).

Here are the concerns mentioned with the current traditional calendar.

Staff concerns:

- Longer, uninterrupted time for PLC. This time is needed for the data teams process which includes: data analysis, switching students, and purposeful planning together. The average data team cycle runs about once every two weeks (give or take). They expressed 50 minutes is not enough and it is often interrupted throughout the day. Time for IEP paperwork was also a heard concern.
- Principals needed to be present in PLCs.
- More planning time (there is an inequity among the elementary and secondary). This also includes individual teacher planning that is not PLC time.
- Feeling extremely burned out with the amount expected in education and not enough time to get it done with the same schedule they have had. The need for family time came forth.
- Moving professional development so that teachers aren't pulled as much from the classroom. Leave them in their classrooms.
- Provide different opportunities for students such as detention to limit missing class, additional opportunities beyond the scheduled classroom time.

Community concerns:

- Cutting hours at elementary
- Secondary getting out later than elementary
- Secondary getting out so late with activities, homework, etc. Didn't like the later release time.

- Kids not supervised

Below is a chart summarizing the needs of staff and the options presented.

Concerns:	Shorten Elementary Day (Cut hours)	Start times, Later start for secondary, earlier for elementary. Elementary gets out earlier, secondary gets out later. Shorten the elementary day.	Take the schedule back to 6 day rotation, but one day no specials every other rotation to provide longer uninterrupted PLC time.	Early Out twice a week.	Early out once a week.	Early out everyday or late start everyday.	4-day week
Longer, Uninterrupted PLC time	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
More Planning Time	X	X				X	X
PD outside of scheduled time with kids							X
Other extended options for kids K-12	X	X				X	X
Comments			Requires a 6 day rotation, but does not restore the instructional time to the specials teachers				
Additional Costs	If going to a 6 day rotation, cost of 1 specials teacher. The other would be able to be given	If going to a 6 day rotation, cost of 1 specials teacher. The other would be able to be given	2 – 3 specials teachers. Would require the 6 day rotation.	If going to a 6 day rotation the cost of 2 - 3 specials teachers.	If going to a 6 day rotation the cost of 2 - 3 specials teachers.	If going to a 6 day rotation, cost of 1 specials teacher. The other would be	Could go to a 6 day rotation and be cost neutral with 2 specials positions.

	because extended day would be built in so the cost of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> one would be neutral.	because extended day would be built in so the cost of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> one would be neutral.				able to be given because extended day would be built in so the cost of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> one would be neutral.	Extended day activities would be built in so that pays for one position, the sub costs for PD moved to Friday gives funds for the second teacher.
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### Moving forward:

We have very few school days left. There is *not* a sufficient amount of time to conduct a process that would involve changes to school start and end times with the staff, parents, and the community. Once the 4-day week was voted down, most of the community moved forward with their businesses. The impact on the community could be negative.

We've reviewed each of Task Force suggestions and left no rock unturned. Student performance, staff needs, fiscal responsibility, and community impact are all important factors.

Here's the options we're working through:

- Possibly moving the elementary specials (art, music, library, P.E./Health) schedule from a 7-day rotation down to a 6-day rotation. This would increase the instructional time for the specials and restore the rotation back to previous years before the extensive budget cuts occurred. We're also looking at a 5-day rotation just as ideas to vet.
- We are drafting the District specials schedule to determine the amount of teachers it would take to move to a 6-day, 5-day, etc. We originally thought it would require two certified staff members. It may be three. We will know more once it's completed. The key idea here is sustainability. We don't want to implement this next year only to RIF staff the following year. Another component is the ability to fill the position with a qualified applicant.
- Possibly lengthening the instructional time for specials without changing the start and end times of the school day. They are currently 50 minutes. If we could extend this, perhaps even by a few minutes for each special, this would increase collaboration time for the grade level PLCs, increase individual teacher planning time, and increase instructional time. Every minute counts.

Once the options are completed, we will share the outcomes with the District.

We welcome any questions or feedback.

Respectfully,

Nicole Bolton  
Kelly McGovern