

Team 21 Interim Recommendation on Time in the Day

The 2012-2016 GEEA Contract charges Team 21 to bring a recommendation by Sept. 16 to the Continuous Improvement Team on “the possibility of additional student instruction and/or teacher work time for implementation at the elementary level at the start of the 2014-2015 school term.” After convening as a new Team for Excellence in May of 2013, Team 21 began work, including more than 50 hours of summer meetings.

In this *Interim Recommendation on Time in the Day*, Team 21:

- Reports on its findings
- Presents its recommendations
- Presents further considerations
- Provides a timeline for next steps

Background

A number of issues underlie the district’s interest in studying time. The new Common Core standards demand more of teachers and students. Teachers and administrators have consistently reported a general sense of “not enough time” for instruction, planning and collaboration. And, there is a growing need for teacher leaders to participate in building organizational capacity through work on curriculum and other fundamental matters.

The 21st Century Learning Initiatives (Think Tank) are closely linked to any analysis of time, because they were motivated in large part *by* time, specifically the need to make the most of it. Those initiatives restructured the elementary day into two main instructional blocks, added two WIN times and created a common collaboration (PLC) time. At the same time, the district added 30 minutes of daily elementary Spanish, starting in first grade. While not directly related to actual time, teacher specialization will have an impact on how teachers use time for instruction, collaboration and planning. Other changes have flowed from these initiatives, such as adjustments to parent-teacher conferences and curriculum nights, student travel and transitions, and procedures for lunch, arrival and dismissal.

As of this writing, the district has had two full weeks of the new structure and one full week of the new PLC schedule. Buildings are experiencing highs and lows as they get their arms around their new reality.

Research

One way to view the huge subject of time is as interlocking gears: length of the day, scheduling components, the many vehicles for instruction, student needs and so forth work together much as gears do; a change in one affects the whole and it is difficult to tweeze out the effects of time

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alone. Any change around time affects district families, partners in the community, facilities and transportation; Team 21 cannot solve these issues, but is cognizant of them as practical factors.

Team 21 has reviewed the literature around time, analyzed the way the district uses its time, and looked at how school districts locally, nationally and even internationally structure time in a general way, although it did not have access to scheduling details.

The research also reveals a wide range of approaches to length of the day and scheduling within the day. Team 21 reviewed research on scheduling time differently, on various approaches implemented at high-need schools and at highly successful schools, and on the impact of adding time to the day as opposed to adding days to the school year. The research is ambiguous; one point of consensus is that simply adding time does nothing; the time must be used effectively. On one point, the research is clear: time devoted to effective teacher collaboration has a positive impact on instructional quality.

Belief Statement

Team 21 is committed to creating a student-centered recommendation. After processing through the research and conversations about what it hopes to achieve, Team 21 developed the following Belief Statement to guide its work.

Team 21 | WHAT WE BELIEVE ABOUT TIME FOR LEARNING

Time for quality learning Time for working together Time for a life in balance

Our schools work hard to build a continuous improvement culture that fosters the values of a professional learning community which recognizes the key role of teachers, nurtures the whole child and allows all learners to live a balanced life. Of all the resources we bring to our mission of “enabling all children to thrive in a changing and increasingly global society,” time is one of the most precious.

Teachers need time to plan, to reflect, to collaborate and to grow professionally if they are to meet increasingly diverse student needs. Students need time to learn in their own way, to reflect on what they have learned and to set meaningful goals. All members of the learning community need time to appreciate each other, to celebrate progress together, to build relationships and to live a full life outside of school.

In addressing its contractual charge around instructional time, Team 21 will develop a recommendation that aligns with these understandings about our culture and with the following beliefs:

- All children can learn; they need time to learn in their own way
- We will never have “enough” time to do all that we want; we continuously strive to maximize the time that we have
- Simply adding time is not the answer; time used well will help us reach our goals
- Adding time must be considered sensitively in light of the whole student –academic, social and emotional development
- The question of “how much time is enough” does not impact the schools alone; this issue also affects our families, our partner organizations and our communities

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Interim Recommendations

Kindergarten today looks more like first grade did in the past. Team 21 knows how difficult it is for a half-day program to cover the new Common Core standards and ensure that kindergarteners are prepared to succeed in first grade—especially for children who enter kindergarten with little or no preschool. Team 21 recommendations are:

- Provide full-day kindergarten, at least for at-risk students, to give more instructional time to those kindergarteners who need it most; consider a tuition-based program for others. This recommendation lengthens the day for kindergarteners, but does not affect the day for other students or for staff
- Shorten art and music time in kindergarten until full-day kindergarten can be implemented. This recommendation does not affect the length of the school day.

Further considerations

The team believes it is premature to make specific recommendations regarding changes to the school day until the elementary buildings have had more time to live the various components of the 21st Century Initiatives implementation and Team 21 has some preliminary data on the impact of these initiatives.

Team 21 has identified several areas for more study in preparation for a recommendation on length of the day; it expects to add to and/or modify these items as it learns more in the coming months about the impact of the newly-structured elementary school day.

- Schedule elementary band/orchestra lessons during music class rather than as pull-outs from core instruction
- Align the elementary teacher work day to the longer Hadley teacher work day in order to achieve an adequate amount of PLC time (45 minutes daily) and individual plan time (45 minutes daily)
- In order to give “all kids get what they need when they need it,” consider lengthening the day to boost instruction for children at risk for academic failure
- Although the Team 21 charge was for the elementary day, Team 21 would like to consider reallocating time to give another 15 minutes for Science and 15 minutes for Social Studies (30 minutes combined) at Hadley

Timeline and next steps

Any recommendation on time will ultimately have to be bargained, during which the recommendation’s rationale, process and direction will be scrutinized; the team feels a responsibility to submit a tight, sturdy recommendation that can stand up under that scrutiny. Before making further recommendations, it would like to have the full school year to assess the impact of the 21st Century Learning Initiatives on elementary life. Recognizing that the Board of Education and GEEA felt an urgency around this issue that led to the original deadline, Team 21

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believes it can meet a February 17 deadline to CIT. Below is a summary how the team would use that time:

September-January

- Look at the results of the monitoring and evaluation processes for 21st Century Initiatives which are being implemented as designed (district level, school/BLT level and teacher level)
- Conduct time study based on random sample of staff
- Continue research, especially on time usage/schedules in benchmark districts

January-February

- Assess findings on 21st Century Initiatives
- Finalize recommendation
- Submit recommendation to CIT Feb. 17, in advance of its Feb. 20 meeting

Appendices

Appendix A: Sampling of research

Appendix B: Summary of other T21 work

Appendix C: List of ideas that the team processed

Appendix D: PLC schedule excerpt

Appendix E: Team 21 Roster

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Appendix A | Sampling of Research

Below is a sampling of the literature studied by Team 21.

Perspectives on lengthening the school year

- http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&_ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=ED461695&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=no&accno=ED461695
- <http://schoolsofthought.blogs.cnn.com/2012/12/05/longer-school-day-coming-for-thousands-of-students/>
- <http://educationnext.org/time-for-school/>
- <http://www.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=3755837>
- http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/post/what-new-research-on-extended-school-day-says/2012/04/18/gIQAAnmV3RT_blog.html
- http://www.opi.mt.gov/pdf/MBI/12Session1/90_90Schools.pdf
<http://www.registercitizen.com/articles/2012/12/02/news/doc50bc38271f36d636457726.txt?viewmode=fullstory>
- [Report of international comparative data and analysis](#)
<http://www.oecd.org/education/skills-beyond-school/48631122.pdf>

How does the US compare?

<http://www.centerforpubliceducation.org/Main-Menu/Organizing-a-school/Time-in-school-How-does-the-US-compare>

State-by-state data

<http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/95/05/9505.pdf>

Relationship between time and instructional quality

<http://newsinfo.iu.edu/web/page/normal/6306.html>

Prisoner of Time from National Education Commission on Time and Learning

<http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/64/52/6452.pdf>

Expanded Time, Enriching Experiences

<http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/education/report/2010/02/17/7336/expanded-time-enriching-experiences/>

How High Achieving Countries Develop Great Teachers – Stanford Research Brief

<http://edpolicy.stanford.edu/publications/pubs/291>

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Appendix B | Summary of topics analyzed

Team 21 preliminarily analyzed the ideas that follow against the rubric below. The team used this analysis to come to agreement on the recommendations and on the topics to focus continuing work on. These ideas will be revisited as the team gathers data around the 21st century initiatives:

Rubric for preliminary analysis

- Impact on learning
- Impact on social/emotional
- Fairness
- Ease of implementation

| Length of Year | Length of Day | Structure of the day | Teacher impact |
|--|---|---|---|
| 1. Extended year for at-risk students | 8. Full day kindergarten | 15. Reduce lunch/recess by 10 minutes | 33. Extend teacher workday at elementary to be consistent with Hadley's |
| 2. Implement year-round school at two schools; traditional calendar at two | 9. Restructure first grade with more interventions | 16. Push in/pull out for the arts | |
| 3. Revise school calendar with respect to breaks | 10. Extended day for at-risk students | 17. Increase content integration into the arts and PE | 34. Make plan time for teachers at elementary consistent with Hadley |
| 4. Schedule all Institute Days in the summer, add 4 instructional days during the year | 11. Flex hours for teachers to meet student needs before and after school | 18. Schedule Band & Orchestra during music | |
| 5. Reduce number of Institute Days | 12. Innovative learning environment for students not at grade level | 19. Shorten the arts and PE at kindergarten | |
| 6. Student attendance on Institute Days with an alternate program | 13. Stagger start/end times | 20. Decrease PE time in 1-5 | |
| 7. Add days to the school year | 14. Shift the day earlier Replace the 30 minutes devoted to FLES | 21. Reduce lunch/recess by 10 minutes | 35. Eliminate SIP days |
| | | 22. Restrict recess to once per day | |
| | | 23. Allocate more time for Science and Social Studies by reducing non-core | |
| | | 24. Decrease art and music time at grades 1-5 | |
| | | 25. Reallocate Take Ten at Hadley | |
| | | 27. Exchange some Hadley PE time for Core Extensions | |
| | | 28. Schedule elementary Band & Orchestra outside the school day | |
| | | 29. Restructure music into one block | |
| | | 30. Add "zero hour" or bonus hour for enrichment & intervention and/or Band & Orchestra | |
| | | 31. Establish volunteer hall guides (parents) to reduce teacher time devoted to transitions | |
| | | 32. Bell-to-bell instruction | |

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Appendix C | Summary of other Team 21 work

21st Century Initiatives monitoring and evaluation

To ensure that the 21st century learning recommendations are being implemented the way they were intended to be, Team 21 created a process for “as-we-go” problem-solving and temperature checks, as well as a framework for long-term evaluation around the elements of fidelity (did we do what we said we would do), satisfaction and impact (what were the effects).

Parent-Teacher conferences

To ensure we have a quality elementary conference process that accommodates teacher specialization and multiage, and is convenient for parents, Team 21 adjusted the framework for conferences that provided time with each teacher, reallocated more time to evenings for parent convenience and developed an online reservation process for elementary.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

To ensure that all teachers (and their students) benefit from highly effective PLCs, Team 21 created guidance documents that reiterate the purpose and responsibilities of PLCs, tools for PLC effectiveness and building schedules that ensure that those who need to meet together have the time to do so before school.

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Appendix D | Sample of PLC schedule

| School Schedule | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|--|--|---|--------------|
| FRANKLIN | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
| Week A Q 1&2 (no K lit coach) | RTI Math Coach | L1 1 Lit Coach/ESL/Sam L/ LMC/PRIS/FL L2Sci MichN L2L Tanya L3S Math Coach/AEC L3L ArtsA | L1 ArtsB L2S Math Coach/AEC/AP L2L Lit Coach/ESL/Sam L/ LMC/PRIS L3S sci MichN L3L Tanya | L1 Math Coach/AEC/AP L2L ArtsC L3L Lit Coach/LMC/Kirk /PRIS MIP/GIP/Resource | STAFF MTG |
| Week B Q 1&2 NO MATH COACH WEEK (no 3 lit coach) | RTI | L1 K Lit Coach/ESL/ SamL/ LMC/ArtsB/PRIS L2S sci/AEC/Tanya L3S ArtsA L3L | L1S sci/AEC/ ArtsB/Tanya L1 1 Lit Coach/ESL/ LMC/PRIS/FL L2S L2L L3S | L2S ArtsC L2L Lit Coach/ESL/Sam L/ LMC/Kirk/PRIS L3S/AEC L3L MIP/GIP/Resource/AP | Job Alike |
| Week C Q 3&4 (no 2 lit coach) | RTI Math Coach | L1 1 Lit Coach/ESL/Sam L/ LMC/Kirk/PRIS/FL L2S MichN L2L L3S Math Coach/AEC/AP/Tanya L3L ArtsA | L1 K Lit Coach/ESL/Sam L/ LMC/ArtsB/PRIS L2SMath Coach/AEC/AP L2L Tanya L3S L3L | L1 Math Coach/AEC L2S L2L ArtsC L3L Lit Coach/LMC/PRIS MIP/GIP/Resource | STAFF MTG |
| Week D Q 3&4 NO MATH COACH WEEK (no 1 lit coach) AEC option to push into Lit PLCs | RTI | L1 K Lit Coach/ESL/Kirk/PRIS/Tany a L2S sci/MichN L3S ArtsA L3L | L1S sci /ArtsB L1L Tanya L2S sci L2L Lit Coach/ESL/SamL/ LMC/PRIS L3S | L1 L2S /LMC/ArtsC L2L L3S L3L Lit Coach/LMC /PRIS/ MIP/GIP/Resource/AP ESL/Principal | JOB ALIKE |

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Appendix E | Team 21 Membership Roster

Chair Persons: Kelly King and Karen Carlson

| Name | Grade/Position | School |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| Karen Carlson | Asst. Supt TLA | CSO |
| Jen Cortez | Level 3 Literacy | Churchill |
| Sarah Cote | AFSCME | Churchill |
| Whitney Crouch | 1 st grade | Churchill |
| Patty Dentinger | Level 2 Literacy | Lincoln |
| Joan Doyle | Level 2 Literacy (2 nd) | Franklin |
| Lisa Earnest | Social Studies | Hadley |
| Beth Ewoldt | Special Education | Hadley |
| Robin Gambol | AFSCME | Forest Glen |
| Alison Girling | Level 3 Literacy | Churchill |
| Tracy Guerrieri | Science | Hadley |
| Kelly King | Level 3 Literacy | Churchill |
| Scott Klespitz | Principal | Churchill |
| Gia Kunkel | Math | Hadley |
| Kathy Meier | Parent | Lincoln |
| Erica Nelson | School Board Liaison | |
| Annie Robinson | Literacy Specialist | Forest Glen |
| Brian Schremp | Level 3 Literacy | Franklin |
| Linda Schweikhofer | Principal | Lincoln |
| Stacey Stout | Literacy Specialist/Level 2 Lit | Lincoln |
| Sami Sutton | Foreign Language | Hadley |
| Susie Thomas | Level 3 STEAM (5 th) | Franklin |
| Kelley Vail | Level 3 Literacy | Lincoln |
| Amy Watroba | Parent | Forest Glen |
| Julie Worthen | Communications | CSO |
| | | |

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