

Mahtomedi Public Schools
Independent School District #832
1520 Mahtomedi Avenue
Mahtomedi, MN 55115

Regular Meeting - Board of Education

Date: May 12, 2016

Agenda Item #9. B

TOPIC: Mahtomedi Middle School Professional Development

BACKGROUND: Every year, as we work with our Instructional Leadership Teams to develop schoolwide goals and create staff development to meet those goals, our staff struggles with finding enough time to do in-depth work. This is especially true for our Professional Learning Communities. All of our teaching staff are involved in one or more PLC. One of the purposes of these PLCs is for teachers to research best teaching practices in their discipline and develop ways to incorporate them into the classroom. Presently, our PLCs meet for 45 minutes twice a month. This time is usually used for developing PLC goals, implementing and checking on progress of PLC goals, and trying to learn about best practice teaching methods. Often, our teachers are busy thinking about trying to meet with students, the next day's lesson plan, or having to call a student's parent more than true PLC work. Teachers really appreciate the PLC time to work with colleagues but right after a busy school day from 2:45 – 3:30 does not give them the undivided time they need to do the important work like research these best practices or examine student work as a group.

It is also important to understand that the Middle School holds two Parent-Teacher Conferences in the Fall and the Spring. Before this year, both the Fall and Spring conferences were held on two Thursday evenings and one Friday morning. The Fall Conferences are at the end of 1st quarter and are well attended and all three days are necessary. The Spring conferences are typically less attended and Friday mornings are especially low in attendance.

PURPOSE OF PRESENTATION: The purpose of this presentation is to provide the Board and community with an overview of how the idea of eliminating one Friday morning during the Spring for Parent-Teacher conferences in lieu of a 4-hour block of time for Professional Learning Communities to meet came to be and the positive effects it had on staff development. The presentation will also discuss the work completed by many of the PLCs and staff comments regarding the time allotted. I will also discuss future plans of some PLCs and how this time may be used in the future.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE: As a result of this presentation, the Board will have an understanding of the need for not just additional time for staff development, but a larger block of time, to allow staff to research best practices, examine student work, and implement new strategies in the classroom. I hope that the Board and community will understand that additional staff development time is not wasted time and our staff can collaborate and create effective programming for our students. Just like our vertical team staff development between grades 6-12 over the past three years has grown into a highly productive and essential time for teachers, our staff believes that having these four hours of PLC time will develop into a time of true exploration and change for the better.

ACTION RECOMMENDED: Discussion Only.

Submitted By:

Mike Neubeck

Name

Mahtomedi Middle School Principal

Title

Concurrence By:



Dr. Mark Larson

Superintendent of Schools