

## Early Dismissals for Teacher Professional Development Every Wednesday

### **Background:**

This new instructional delivery system, with teachers being asked to simultaneously teach students in class as well as online is placing tremendous demands on our teachers. They are being shorted on time to lesson plan and work on curriculum and special education. Most serious is our lack of time for teacher professional development (PD) given the demands this pandemic is placing on our teachers.

In September, the board approved a proposal coming from our Teacher Leadership Cadre (TLC) to dismiss school every Wednesday at 1:00 PM to allow teachers extra planning, collaboration, and professional development time from 1:15 until 3:45.

This practice is commonly used by many school districts in a normal year. Both Mason City and Hampton-Dumont (to name but two of our neighbors) dismiss school at 1:00 PM every Wednesday for teacher professional development in past normal school years.

On September 17, the board approved this on a trial basis through the end of the first semester with review and possible renewal at the December 17 school board meeting.

During the past three months, this decision and the time for teacher has proven essential. Teachers are using the time productively, and they greatly appreciate the consideration of the school board on this issue.

A stipulation for this venture remains that this time is not for teachers to leave school early to run personal errands or make professional appointments outside the leave provisions in the master contract.

### **Recommended Action:**

I recommend the board move to extend dismissing school at 1:00 PM every Wednesday and running through the end of the second semester, Wednesday, May 26, 2021.