Concord School District
Instructional Committee Minutes
October 1, 2014

Committee members present: Barbara Higgins, Chair; Jennifer Patterson, Tom Croteau, Rusty Cofrin

Other Board members present: Clint Cogswell, Kass Ardinger

Administrators and school staff present: Donna Palley, Assistant Superintendent; Kris Gallo, Christa McAuliffe School Principal; Kathleen Riordan, Abbot-Downing School Principal

Elementary School Schedules

Donna Palley, Kris Gallo and Kathleen Riordan presented information about the new school schedules which have been implemented this school year at Christa McAuliffe and Abbot-Downing Schools.

The elementary principals spent two days in August with Michael Rettig, a specialist in school scheduling. Mr. Rettig provided expert advice to administrators about schedules that would be supportive of the following needs:

- Uninterrupted blocks of teaching time for core subjects
- Designated time for intervention/enrichment
- Time for grade-level teams to work together
- Consistency in time allocation for content areas

Before they began working on schedules, the principals endorsed the following time allocations for the grades 1-5 school day:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Minutes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language Arts</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies/Science</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specials</td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intervention/Extension</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lunch/Recess</td>
<td>40</td>
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Examples of schedules were shared and explained by Principals Gallo and Riordan. They described the impact of the schedules on students, teachers, specialists and support staff. The new schedules are based on a 6-day rotation.

As a result of the implementation of the new schedule, the amount of uninterrupted core teaching time has increased, with fewer students being pulled out of this instructional time for special services or music lessons. There are two 30-minute intervention/enrichment blocks available every day. During this time, students can receive a variety of intervention and/or enrichment instruction, including special education services, Title I tutoring, ELL support, and instrument lessons. Teachers have more time for collaboration and professional learning with grade-level teams.

Time allocations for core subjects and for specials are consistent across grades and between the schools. The new schedule provides teachers and students with predictable daily schedules, and flexibility to work within their grade-level team. The schedule is supportive of both departmentalization and co-teaching, and is helpful to staff providing student services.

Several challenges with the new schedule were noted. Art, music and PE teachers have back-to-back classes. At both Christa McAuliffe and Abbot-Downing Schools, three of the five grades have three classes, with two grades of four classes. The students in the ‘four class’ grades are regrouped into three groups for their specials, with students from one of the four classes divided into the other three. This means that for two grade levels, specialists have larger class sizes.

Board members commented positively about the new schedule, noting that it represents a more efficient use of instructional time, with more opportunities for teacher collaboration and effective provision of special services. The benefits appear to outweigh the challenges.

Mill Brook School and Broken Ground School administrators also developed new schedules with Mr. Rettig. They will be exploring the staffing needed to implement them, with potential budget implications. Mr. Rettig will return to Concord in March 2015 to work with middle and high school administrators, and to check back in with elementary principals.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Palley, Recorder