



Littleton Public Schools

Improving Student Learning

Recommitting to Professional Learning
Communities in LPS

Improving Student Learning

- An Opportunity: Moving From Good to Great
- All Students means ALL
- Learning from the experts
- What would it look like?
- Give me feedback!



Good to *Great*

In LPS, all means ALL!

Our new district achievement goal states:
“100 percent of LPS students will graduate
prepared for meaningful, post-secondary
opportunities.” *100 percent.*

This is our commitment and promise to
our students.



21st Century teachers = 21st Century student learning

- Collaboration
- Critical thinking
- Creativity
- Communication

Public Schools Agrarian Calendar

- ❖ 185 teacher days
- ❖ 175 student days
- ❖ 7.5 hours per day

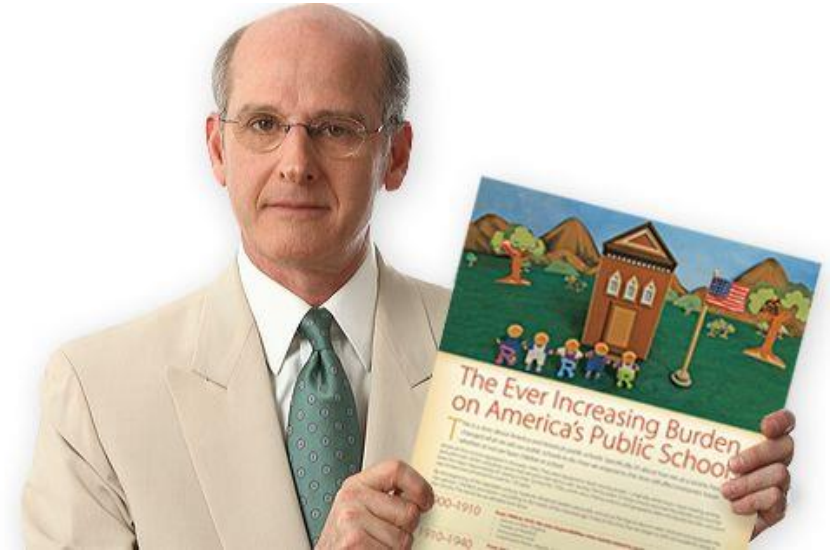


Blueberries

JamieVollmer.com/blueberries 

[The Ever Increasing Burden on America's
Public Schools](#) 

[Schools Cannot Do It Alone](#) 



The Issue of Time

- Staff meetings
- IEP/504
- Prep Time
- Student Study Team/Intervention
- Professional Development (training)
- Report Cards/Parent Conferences
- Grading Assessments
- PLC Collaboration

What's currently in place

4, half-day elementary planning days – an attempt to provide adequate planning time blocks for elementary teachers, more in alignment with secondary teacher planning time

Nonstudent days – parent/teacher conferences; day after winter break is the only staff development in the second semester for many schools

10, 2-hour PLC late starts – time for teachers to collaborate with one another, share best practices, make data-driven decisions about teaching and learning

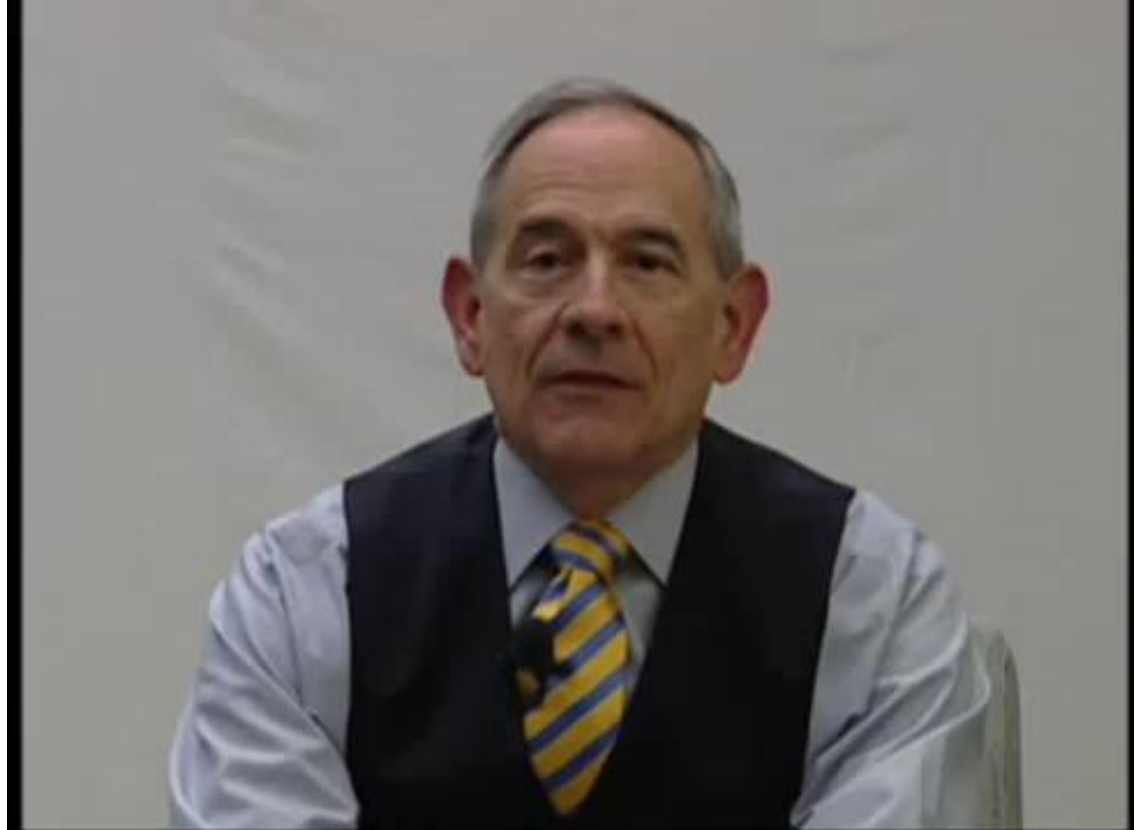
Improving Student Learning

Learning From the Experts

“The reason Professional Learning Communities increase student learning is that they produce more good teaching by more teachers more of the time. Put simply, PLCs improve teaching, which improves student results, especially for the least advantaged students.”

Jonathon Saphier, 2005

Rick DuFour on the Importance of PLCs



Learning From the Experts

"There's never been greater consensus about what it's going to require of educators in order to improve student learning in all of their schools....the one thing the highest performing school systems in the world have in common is an understanding that a system can only be as good as the people within it."

Rick DuFour, EdD, former public school educator, prolific author and sought-after consultant, is recognized as one of the leading authorities on helping school practitioners implement the Professional Learning Communities at Work™ process in their schools and districts.

Accredited: Turnaround

Accredited: Priority Improvement

Accredited: Improvement

Accredited

Accredited: Distinction

Englewood Schools

- **2010: Turnaround (11th lowest performing of 178 districts)**
- **2011: Priority Improvement**
- **2012: Priority Improvement**
- **2013: Improvement**
- **2014: Improvement**
- **2015: No Data/New Assessment**
- **2016: Accredited**

Learning From the Experts

Instructional delivery consumes about 80 percent of U.S. teachers' total working time compared to about 60 percent for teachers in high performing nations, leaving teachers abroad much more time to plan and learn together, developing high-quality curriculum and instruction.

How High-Achieving Countries Develop Great Teachers

Learning From the Experts

Reflection and creativity are enhanced within a collaborative environment like PLCs. There is little of either when teachers work in isolation.

Former Finnish school teachers who now teach in the U.S. say that there is far less flexibility, creativity, reflection, trust, and teacher input in U.S. schools...so much so that they hardly recognize the teaching profession.

When Finnish Teachers Work in America's Public Schools

Learning from the Experts

The highest performing countries such as China, Finland, Japan, and Korea do not have more instructional minutes per school year than the U.S. The significant difference is the time that teachers in those countries have without students to collaborate with their colleagues:

- Teachers in highest performing countries: **15 to 25 hours per week**
- Teachers in U.S.: **3 to 5 hours per week**.

How High-Achieving Countries Develop Great Teachers

Learning from the Experts

The research suggests that the authentic work of PLCs allows educators to use their instructional time more effectively because they are responding to the needs of students.

The Center for Public Education

Improving Student Learning

An opportunity to go from Good to Great

Community is changing

Potential changes to state standards

Complex curriculum and instruction needed

Rigorous (and relevant) Colorado graduation requirements

Balance...



Student
Outcomes &
System
Improvement

Hardship /
Inconvenience
for Families

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What would it look like?



Improving Student Learning

Instead of 10, 2-hour late starts...

1-hour late start or 1-hour early release most weeks

More than doubles the amount of collaborative time



Improving Student Learning

Add a few minutes to every school day

No instructional time lost

School Age Childcare Available
(for no *additional* fee)

Transportation available



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LPS teachers said...

“Sometimes the timing of our PLC days is not conducive to analyzing data, so I’m looking forward to the possibility of having PLC time every week next year.”

Improving Student Learning

LPS teachers said...

“Once a month is not enough time. I would rather have shorter periods of time more often to support this work.”



Benefits to Students?



1. There is clarity regarding what students are expected to learn and be able to do.
2. Each student's learning is monitored on an ongoing and timely basis.
3. When students struggle, extra time and support are provided.
4. When students have already mastered the intended learning outcomes, extended learning opportunities are provided.

Other *Benefits*



Frequent, consistent, protected time for teachers to meet

Consistent weekly schedule for parents and students - less problematic for families & less disruptive to school schedules

Reduces substitute time in the classroom for PLC teacher training

Other

Benefits



Other large Denver metro districts provide consistent time for PLCs (some weekly, some biweekly). Schools determine the scheduling.

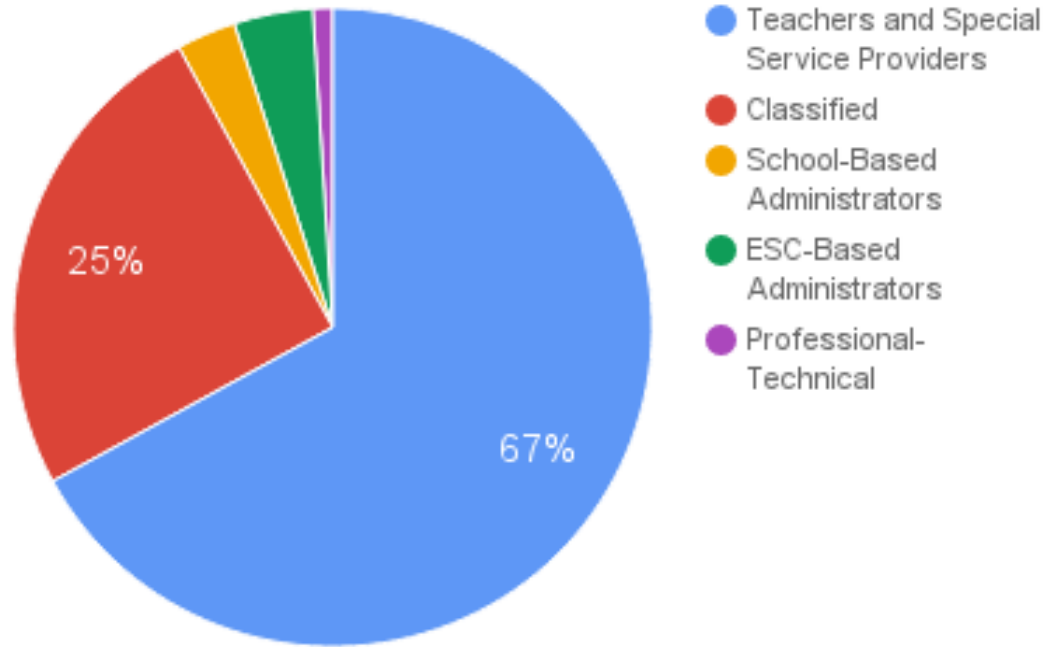
We want system-wide, consistent, accountable.

Better for students, better for families, better for teachers

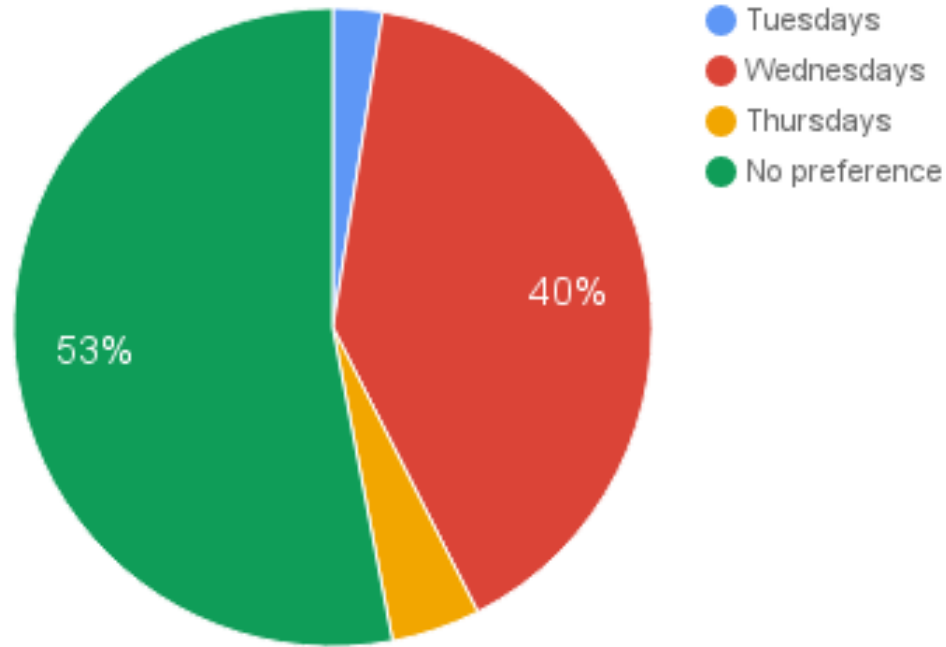
Improving Student Learning

- Imagine what our teachers could do if they had the same opportunities to collaborate on a regular basis all year long.
- We owe it to our students here in LPS to give them a highly effective teacher in every classroom.
- That's what more frequent time for PLCs can do.
- PLCs are the most important structure we use to improve student learning.

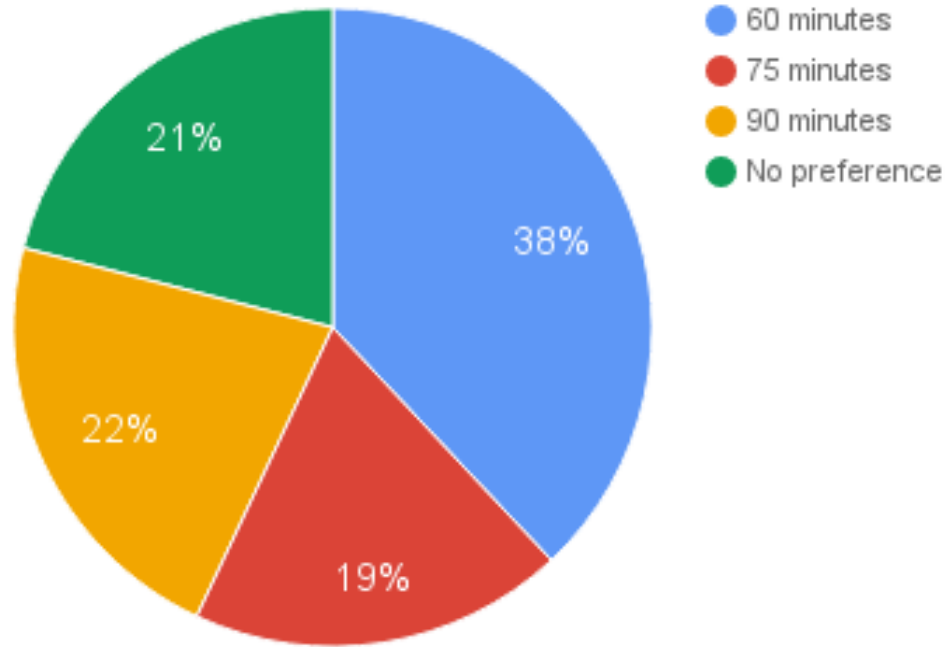
Percentages of survey respondents (1,038)



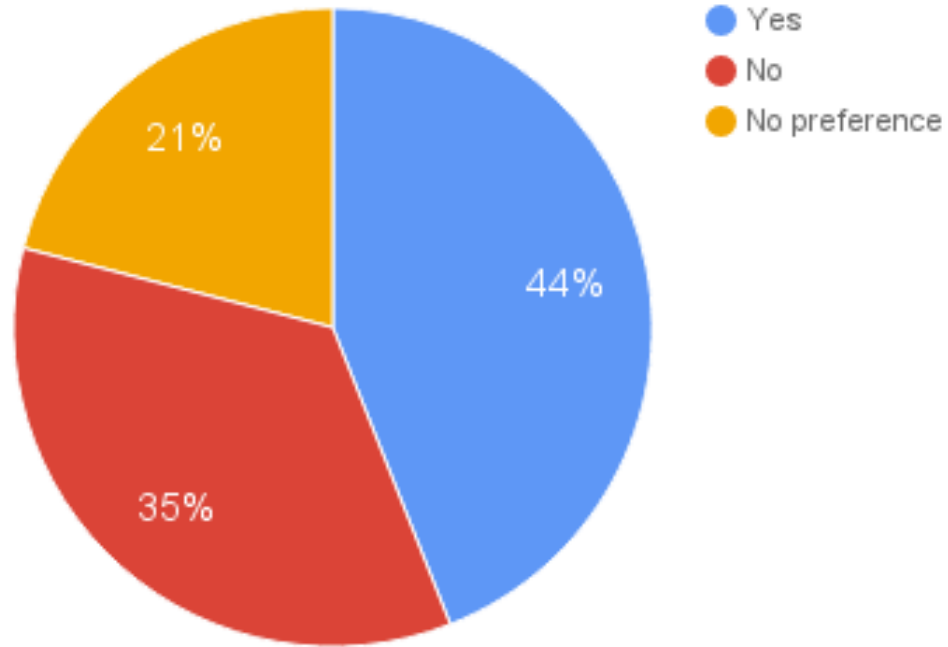
Day of the week considered most effective for PLCs



Length of time considered most effective for more frequent PLCs



Should early releases be considered?



50% to 56% of teachers and SSPs said that more frequent, consistent PLC time would lead to:

- a more systematic approach to providing interventions for students who are experiencing difficulty with content
- a clearer focus on student learning
- a deeper understanding of instructional strategies that impact student learning and engagement (best practices)
- deeper shared knowledge of standards, and what students are expected to know and be able to do
- more common goals for student learning within each PLC
- more consistent monitoring of each student's progress toward identified learning outcomes.



Process & Input

- Tom Many Training
- Staff Meetings and Survey
- Parent Meetings, Website and Survey
- Board Workshop March 9
- Board Discussion March 23 (tent)
- Board Action April 13 (tent)



Implications for School Day Start and End Times

Meeting the Needs of Students: Tentative for 2017-2018:

- ❖ high schools start 30 minutes later every day
- ❖ middle schools start about the same time every day
- ❖ 11 elementary schools start about 9 a.m. every day
- ❖ Field and Centennial keep current extended day schedule
- ❖ No changes to the calendar; only start and end times

Implications for School Day Start and End Times

- ❖ Research says high school students benefit from a later start to the school day
- ❖ Setting the stage for improved transportation services in the future

Next Steps for Parents

Visit LPS Website

<http://littletonpublicschools.net/district/improving-plcs-emerging-idea>

❖ learn more

❖ take the survey--provide feedback related to the importance of improving student learning and continuous improvement of LPS

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