

The logo for Littleton Public Schools features a stylized blue graphic on the left, composed of several overlapping rectangular shapes that suggest an open book or a modern architectural structure. A horizontal blue line extends from the right side of this graphic across the page.

Littleton Public Schools

Improving Student Learning

Recommitting to Professional Learning
Communities and
an analysis of start times and
transportation compression in LPS

Improving Student Learning

- The Process
- An Opportunity: Moving From Good to Great
- Expert opinions and research
- What might it look like?
- Give me feedback!



Process & Input

- An organic and evolving process
- Board of Education goal setting with Superintendent (spring 2016)
- Tom Many Training (Admin/Teacher Facilitators summer/fall 2016)
- 22 Staff Meetings and Survey (fall 2016)
- 30 Parent and Community Meetings, Website and Survey (winter 2016-17)
- Final Staff/Parent & Student Surveys (Feb. 27-March 3, 2017)
- Board Workshop March 9, 5:15 p.m. (review data, input, and feedback)
- Board Discussion March 9, meeting starts at 6:30 p.m. (public comment welcome)
- Possible Board Action March 23 , meeting starts at 6:30 p.m.



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.

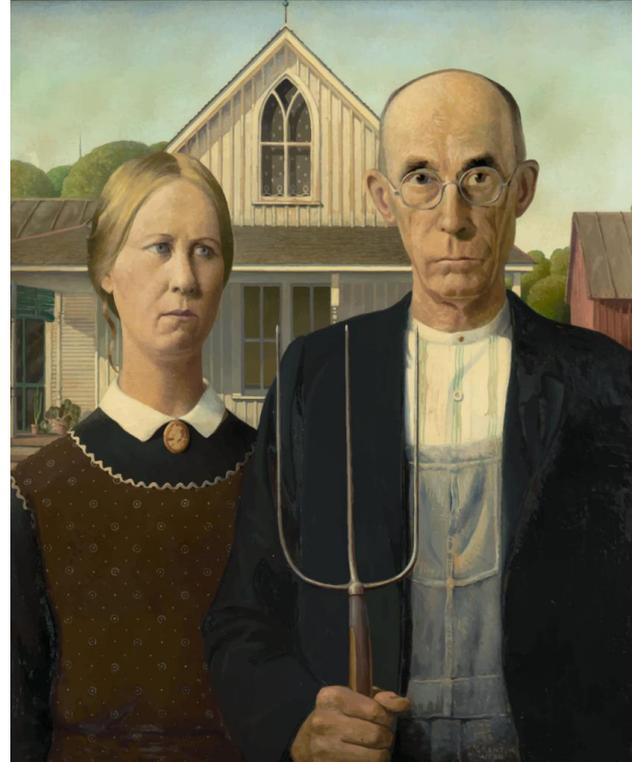


21st Century teachers = 21st Century student learning

- Collaboration
- Critical thinking
- Creativity
- Communication

Public Schools Agrarian Calendar

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

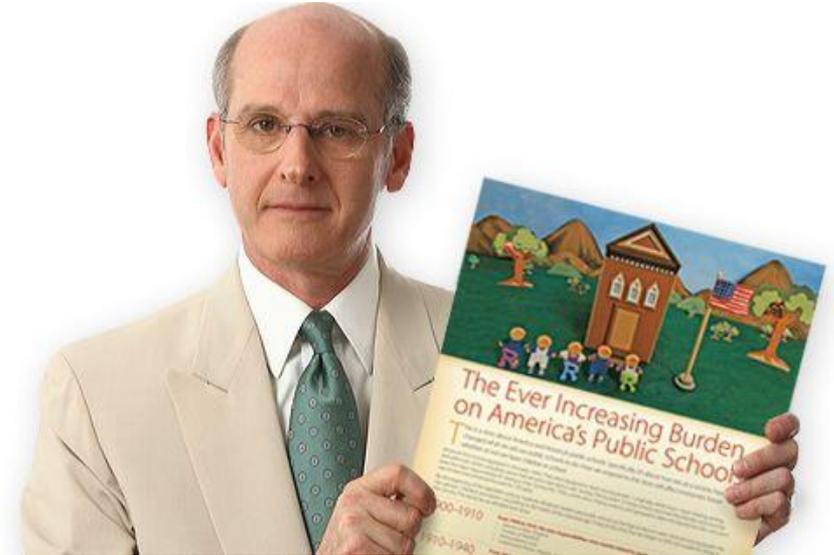


Blueberries

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
- **Professional Learning Communities**

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; less than 10 hours of professional development in the 2nd semester

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

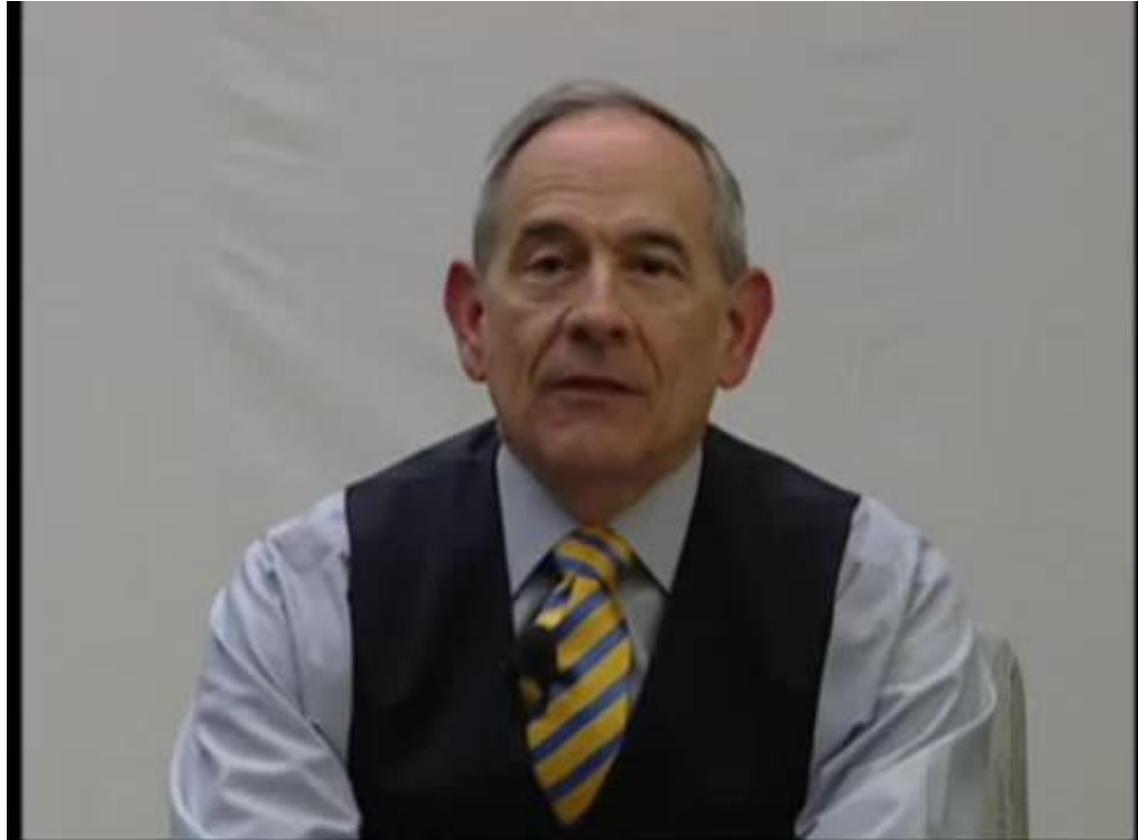
Benefits to Students?

An explanation of PLCs



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.

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

Improving Student Learning

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.”

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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

Sleep and Start Times

Lisa J. Meltzer, Ph.D., CBSM

Associate Professor of Pediatrics

National Jewish Health

Division of Behavioral Health, Department of Pediatrics



Deficient Sleep in Teenagers

- Mood and affect changes
- Behavior problems
 - Non-compliance
 - Aggression
 - Hyperactivity
 - Poor impulse control
- Risk taking behaviors and increased accidents



Beebe (2011); Gruber et al. (2012); Owens et al. (2014)

Deficient Sleep in Teenagers

- Neurocognitive deficits
 - Attention
 - Memory
 - Executive functioning
- Weight gain
 - Increased caloric intake
 - Increased consumption fats and carbs



Signs of Deficient Sleep



- Needs to be awakened in morning
- Sleeps 2+ hours on weekends or vacations than weekdays
- Falls asleep in school or other inappropriate times
- Behavior/mood differ following nights of increased sleep

Later School Start Time Outcomes

- Multiple studies have demonstrated the benefit of changing to a later school start time...
- Students getting > 8 hours sleep/night
- Better academic outcomes
 - Less depression
 - Less caffeine use
 - Fewer car crashes
- Better attendance rates
- Higher graduation rates
- Reduced tardiness

That's nice, but what about elementary school students?

*Looking for the “Sweet Spot”
in school start times to
benefit all students.*

Sleep and Academic Performance

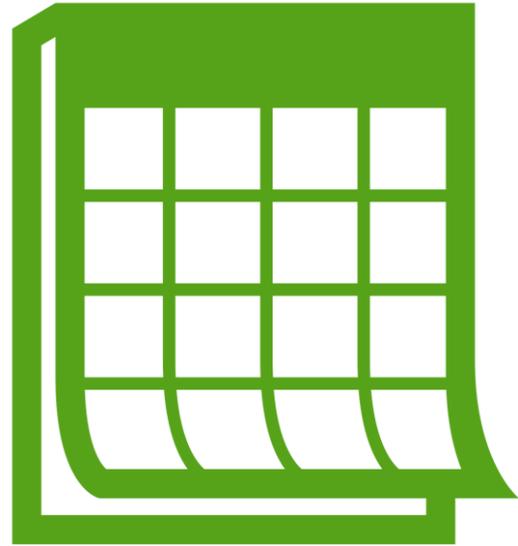
- Not a large body of research available
- *Kentucky study reported “earlier school start times can be associated with poorer school performance in elementary schools”
- Contradictory evidence from other school districts who have “flipped” start times

Minneapolis School District

- Elementary school start times changed from 8:40 to 7:40 a.m.
- Students were more alert at start of day and remained energized throughout day
- Students had fewer morning transitions and were more ready to learn
- Teachers and students were more patient and productive in the afternoon
- Fewer behavior problems
- Increased participation in school activities

Improving Student Learning

What would it look like?



Scenario One:

No Change.

➤ Potential consequences.

Parameters

- Elementary School Day = 6 hours, 44 minutes
- Middle School Day = 7 hours, 1 minute
- High School Day = 7 hours, 2 minutes

Meets state mandates for length of school day

Provides snow day allowance

- Approx. 30 minutes between transportation routes

Scenario Two: Flip Start Times & have weekly late starts for PLCs

Level	Current		Flipped Start Times (aligned with research)		Beginning Bell on PLC Late Starts (one per week)
	a.m.	p.m.	a.m.	p.m.	a.m.
ES–Group 1	8:36	3:13	8:00	2:44	9:00
ES–Group 2	9:06	3:43	8:00	2:44	9:00
Field ES	8:40	3:47	7:50	3:04	8:50
Centennial ES	8:16	3:18	7:50	2:59	8:50
Middle Schools	7:54	2:43	9:00	4:01	10:00
Arapahoe	7:21	2:16	8:30	3:32	9:30
Heritage	7:21	2:18	8:30	3:32	9:30
Littleton	7:21	2:14	8:30	3:32	9:30

DRAFT

Scenario Three: Flip Start Times & have weekly early releases for PLCs

Level	Current		Flipped Schedule (aligned with research)		Ending Bell on PLC Early Releases (one per week)
	a.m.	p.m.	a.m.	p.m.	p.m.
ES–Group 1	8:36	3:13	8:00	2:44	1:44
ES–Group 2	9:06	3:43	8:00	2:44	1:44
Field ES	8:40	3:47	7:50	3:04	2:04
Centennial ES	8:16	3:18	7:50	2:59	1:59
Middle Schools	7:54	2:43	9:00	4:01	3:01
Arapahoe	7:21	2:16	8:30	3:32	2:32
Heritage	7:21	2:18	8:30	3:32	2:32
Littleton	7:21	2:14	8:30	3:32	2:32

DRAFT

Scenarios 2 & 3: Flip Start Times & have weekly late starts or early releases for PLCs

- “Flips” the schedule: elementary earliest, then secondary, which aligns with most research. Other districts exploring this option, also.
- Common, earlier start time for most elementary schools.
- Middle and high schools begin an hour later.
- Paves the way for a compressed and more efficient transportation service in the future.
- Possible impact to activities, athletics, and student work schedules.

Scenarios 2 & 3: Flip Start Times & have weekly late starts or early releases for PLCs

If PLC time is increased, in an effort to help families, School Age Child Care on PLC days will be the **same price** as on other days of the week.

Additionally, an option for Child Care at **half price** for the PLC time only will be available.

Scenario Four: Flip Start Times & pay teachers to lengthen a day/wk 75 min. for PLCs

Level	Current		Flipped Schedule (aligned with research)		End of day for teachers once a week (costs \$1.4 M)
	a.m.	p.m.	a.m.	p.m.	p.m.
ES–Group 1	8:36	3:13	8:00	2:37	3:52
ES–Group 2	9:06	3:43	8:00	2:37	3:52
Field ES	8:40	3:47	7:50	2:57	4:12
Centennial ES	8:16	3:18	7:50	2:51	4:06
Middle Schools	7:54	2:43	9:00	3:49	5:04
Arapahoe	7:21	2:16	8:30	3:25	4:40
Heritage	7:21	2:18	8:30	3:25	4:40
Littleton	7:21	2:14	8:30	3:25	4:40

Survey Feedback

*498 elementary parents indicate elementary start time tolerance
(could select multiple options):*

- 149 selections for a start time of 7:45 a.m.
- 149 selections for a start time of 8 a.m.
- 124 selections for a start time of 8:15 a.m.
- 197 selections for a start time of 8:30 a.m.
- 139 selections for a start time of 8:45 a.m.
- 155 selections for a start time of 9 a.m.
- 127 selections for no change to start times.
- 53 selections for no preference.

Observation:
No clear preference for elementary start time.

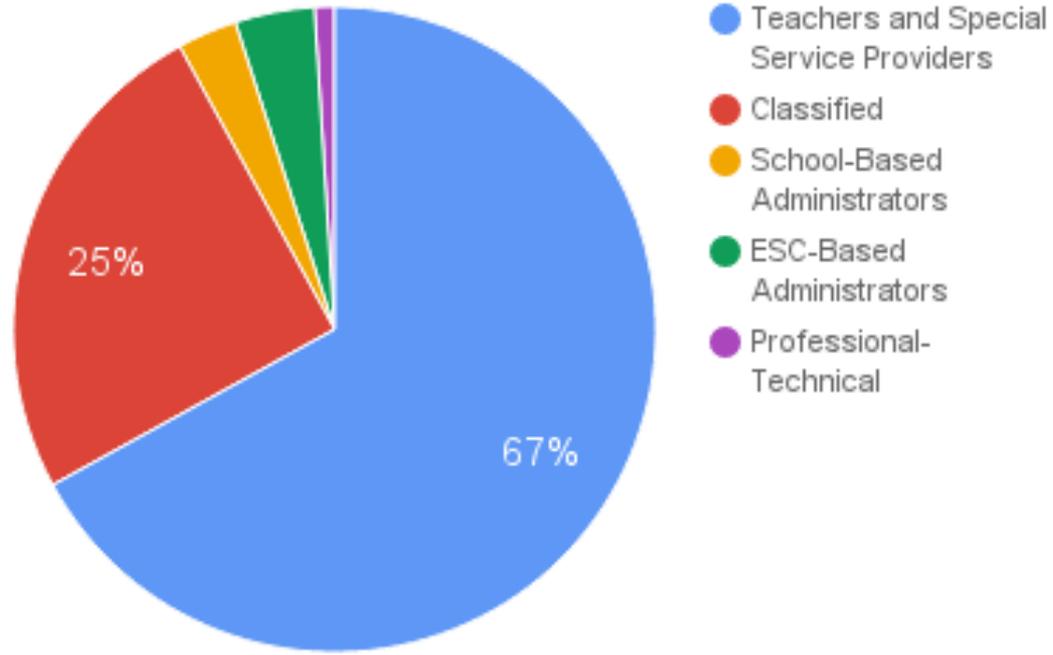
Survey Feedback

*285 high school parents indicate high school start times tolerance
(could select multiple options):*

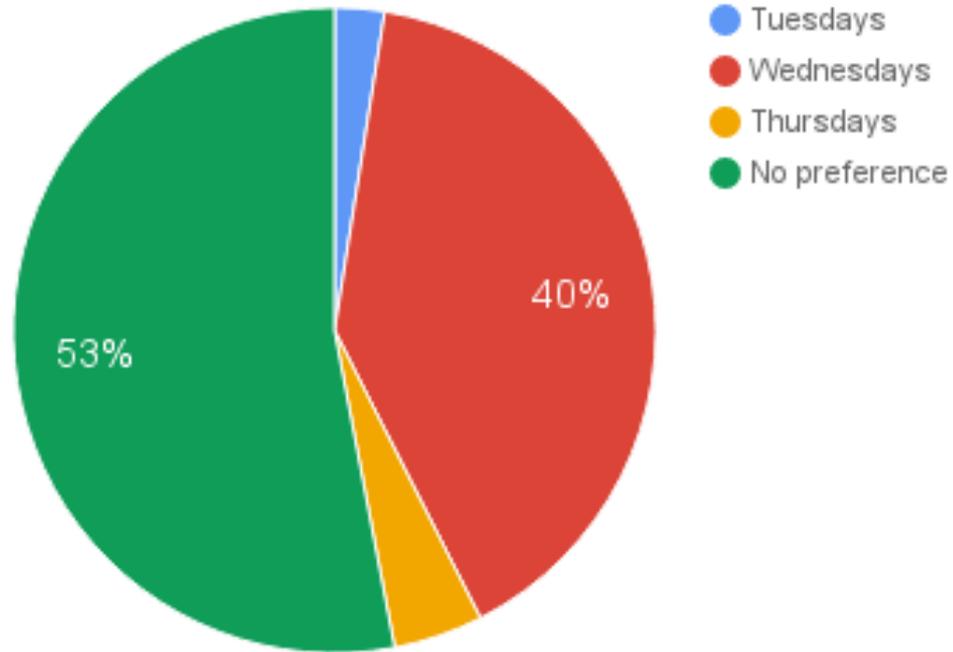
- 91 selections for a start time of 7:45 a.m.
- 131 selections for a start time of 8 a.m.
- 160 selections for a start time of 8:15 a.m.
- 47 selections for no change to start times.
- 13 selections for no preference.

Observation:
Clear preference for a later
start time for high schools.

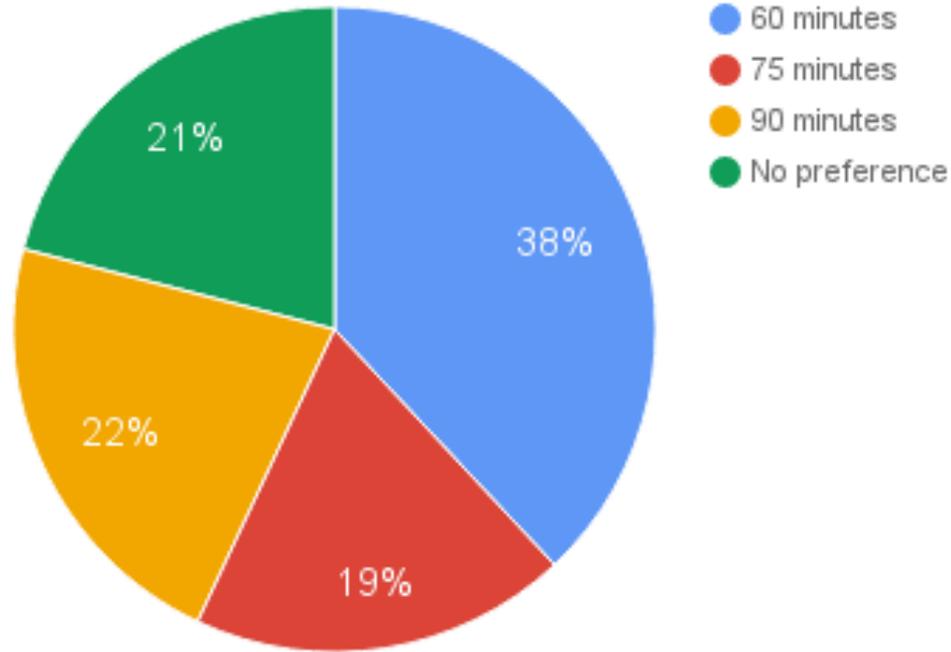
Percentages of survey respondents (1,038)



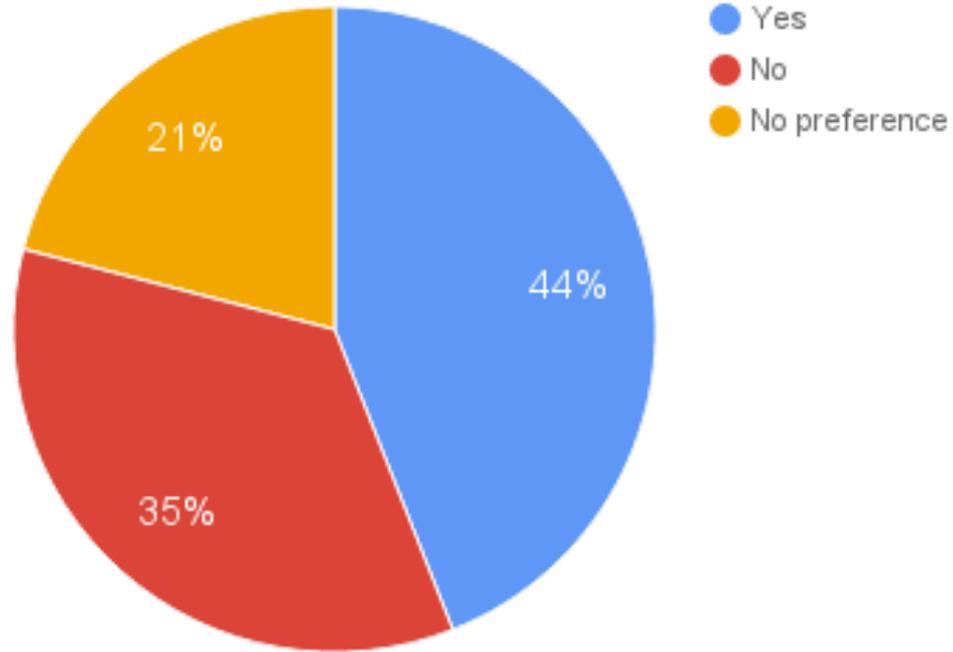
Day of the week considered most effective for PLCs



Length of time considered most effective for more frequent PLCs



Should early releases be considered?



When allowed to choose any and all of the following statements which captured their current thinking:

- **29%** of teachers and SSPs chose “I am happy with the current schedule of PLC time”
- **46%** of teachers and SSPs chose “I like the idea of more frequent, consistent PLC time”
- **28%** of teachers and SSPs chose “I am not opposed to more frequent, consistent PLC time, but think that LPS should wait until the 18/19 school year to implement changes to PLC time, so that the best plan possible can be implemented”
- **11%** of teachers and SSPs chose “None of the above statements capture my thinking”



The majority 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.



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

Improving Student Learning

