

**EMBEDDED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**  
**Information Update**  
**AUGUST 2009 (revised following Admin Meeting)**

**Fact:** As per Board motion in May, all division schools (exceptions at Rocky Mountain House due to bussing agreements with Wild Rose School division) are scheduled to dismiss one half hour before regular dismissal time each Monday to accommodate embedded professional development for staff.

**Concern:** This is a change from the last three years where teachers stayed an additional half hour beyond the regular operational day dismissal time to permit a reasonable amount of time to plan weekly professional development activities. This additional half hour contributed by teachers will not be mandated division wide this year as the three year pilot as agreed on by ATA has come to an end.

**Possibilities:** Operating weekly PD for one half hour has been deemed problematic. Several options have been explored on how to honor that the embedded time falls during the operational day and also provides enough time to assist school PD committees to plan quality PD.

Senior administration has discussed the topic of embedded PD with the ATA local President and Vice President (August 20). The possibility of adjusting schedules to have one hour of embedded PD on alternate weeks only was discussed as one possible solution.

Options and implications were further explored at the division administrator's meeting on August 21. In efforts to encourage quality PD and honor the time allocation for embedded PD a decision on implementation was made to support the practice of having one hour of PD on alternate Mondays.

On alternate Mondays PD will be scheduled for one hour (using the full monthly allotment of two hours embedded PD in two one hour sessions rather than four one half hour sessions). On Mondays when PD is not scheduled the early dismissal time can be treated similarly to the regular dismissal time of other school days (teacher leaves the school, chooses to stay and plan, coaches etc). If, however, the school administration in collaboration with teachers decide to use the time differently they have the freedom to do so as this is a school by school prerogative.

The ATA is to be commended on the willingness to work with administration in the coming months to make recommendations for PD for the next school year.

To facilitate sharing between schools and continuity administration requested a calendar of embedded PD dates be developed. Dates are as follows (exceptions are St. Dominic, St. Matthew, St. Patrick schools who have alternative schedules):

**Sept 21, October 5, October 26, Nov. 9, Nov. 23, December 7, January 4, Jan. 18, Feb. 1, March 8, March 22, April 12, April 26, May 10, May 31, June 14 and June 28.**

### SOME FACTS TO INFORM UNDERSTANDING

Embedded PD time is to be used for PD events planned by school administration in collaboration with the school PD committee. This time is embedded in the operational hours of the school day.

Staff meetings or other meetings are not included in the embedded PD time.

School principals continue to have the authority to call meetings or to plan additional professional development activities where deemed necessary and if sufficient notice is given to teachers , and the amount of time for the activities is reasonable, teachers are obligated to attend.

Full day PD days as set in the calendar do not change.

The operational school day is the time between the commencement of the school day and the dismissal time for the day. Instructional minutes are the minutes of assigned instructional workload (teaching time or workload assignment) and cannot exceed the hours identified in the local collective agreement.

Understandably, teachers do not work at school 100% of their time in actual teaching with their students. Events like opening activities, prayer, lunch, recess, breaks or transition times, teacher preps, school assemblies, special guest speakers, school liturgies and fire drills are part of the operational day beyond classroom instruction. In order to fit in the necessary activities of a school and honor the minimum instructional minutes, schools generally have operational hours of about 6.5 hours per day. Within that time frame all non instructional but essential activities plus the minimum instructional hours must be scheduled. Exact start and dismissal times are affected by bussing schedules as well so the begin and end times may vary between schools (eg. Holy Family – 8:25 start, 3:00 dismissal – total 6 hours and 35 minutes operational day whereas Camille J. Lerouge begins at 8:47 and dismisses at 3:19 – a total of 6 hours and 32 operational minutes). See sample breakdown as an example:

Example: School A begins at 8:55 and dismisses at 3:30.

	<u>Instructional time</u>	<u>Non - instructional</u>
8:55 – 9:00	Opening activities and prayer	5 min
9:00 – 10:30	Instruction to students	90 min
10:30 – 10:45	Recess	15 min
10:45 – 12:00	Instruction to students	75 min
12:00 - 12:45	Lunch recess	45 min
12:45 – 2:15	Instruction to students	90 min

2:15 – 2:30	Recess		15 min
2:30 – 3:30	Instruction to students		60 min
	Totals:	<u>315 minutes</u>	<u>80 minutes</u>
		(5.25 hours)	(1.3)

\*\*184 teaching days x 5.25 hours = 966 hours of instruction

\*\*This school meets the minimum instructional hours (960 hours) and exceeds it by 6 hours (966 hours) which permits some flexibility when instructional time is taken for necessary activities such as school assemblies, liturgies or crisis response practices.

With the implementation of embedded PD, teachers are dismissed one half hour before the regular operational student dismissal time to permit time during the operational day to participate in embedded PD. Instructional minutes do not change but flexibility in the number of recesses, length of lunch hour and transition times can be adjusted to accommodate the allocation of time for PD. Each school principal has the authority to make these adjustments. With approved embedded PD, teachers are able to have time during the operational day to participate in the collaborative professional development activities that assist in enriching personal professional practice.

Minimum instructional hours are determined by the board. School principals determine how the hours of instructional are met in school scheduling.

**What is next?**

Discuss and share with your staff and determine how your school will proceed.

Continue to promote with parents the benefits of embedded PD as opportunities for educators to collaborate and share best practices.

A committee of senior administration, A.T.A. representatives, school administration, parents and school board trustees will be formed to further explore the matter of division staff professional development. The committee is expected to complete a proposal by Christmas.

Further questions, please contact me.

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