



Calendar Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, December 1, 2021; 4:00 p.m.
Professional Learning Lab

Members present: Interim Superintendent Dr. Marcus Lewton, Assistant Superintendent Keith Harris, Director of Instruction Melanie Kathrein, Mrs. Heidi Haugen-Smith (Classified Leadership), Mrs. Crystal Hoerner (Jefferson Elementary), Mrs. Barbara Shockey (District-wide PAC representative), Mrs. Jo Erickson (Classified Leadership), Mr. Jeffrey Whitehead (Southwest Community High School), Mrs. Diana Stroud (Dickinson Middle School), Mrs. Lisa Nauman (Berg Elementary), Mrs. Paris Hill (Heart River Elementary), Mrs. Kandace King (Lincoln Elementary), Mrs. Tammy Meschke (Roosevelt Elementary), Mrs. Shawna Knipp (DEA President), Ms. Cassie Francis (Dickinson Middle School Principal), and Mrs. Desirae Tibor (Dickinson High School).

The meeting was called to order by Interim Superintendent Lewton at 4:00 p.m. Individuals introduced themselves and the building or committee they represented.

A draft calendar for the 2022-2023 school year was available at the meeting. Dr. Lewton explained the draft calendar was the current school calendar with information moved forward to 2022-2023. It could be a starting point. Dr. Lewton opened the floor for input.

Mrs. Smith said she appreciated the days built-in for a longer break during Easter and also appreciated school in session on Wednesday before the Christmas break.

Mrs. Erickson inquired if the days set aside for the administrative conference in October could be converted to student contact days. Dr. Lewton responded that many DPS administrators attend the conference. Mrs. Erickson noted there are many days off in the first half of the year and felt some days could be moved to the second half of the year.

Mrs. Erickson inquired if the District could consider having a 4-day school week and have Fridays off. Dr. Lewton responded that would have to be petitioned to the state superintendent with support from the community. This topic would not be within the scope of this committee. Several committee members felt the community would not support a 4-day week due to finding daycare and RASP on Fridays.

Dr. Lewton asked for feedback regarding the early outs since the District moved from four early releases to seven early releases. Mrs. Smith responded the parents appreciated the early releases on Fridays as families could make it an extended weekend. Mrs. Nauman shared the early release professional development meetings can sometimes end close to 4:00. This makes for a long Friday. Mrs. King explained at Lincoln teachers can leave if they need to if the meetings are running too long. Dr. Lewton explained the Friday early release days have seen high absenteeism from educators.

Mrs. Tibor reported on behalf of the high school. When early releases are held on the last day of the school year, it makes it difficult for the teachers at the high school to administer final examinations. Dr. Lewton felt the early release day on the last day of school may not be the best option to utilize professional development time. Ms. Francis noted it was difficult to keep the attention of the middle school students if they are there a full day on the last day of school.

Mrs. Smith suggested moving the early release day on the last day of school to another date, such as on a Friday in December 2022. There was discussion regarding events on the last day of school or empty time to fill for the students. At the middle school, the Chromebooks are collected before the last day of school. Mrs. Kathrein suggested moving the early release to Friday, December 2 or Friday, December 9. The consensus of the committee was to move the Thursday, May 25, 2023, early release day to Friday, December 9, 2022. There would be a full day of school on the last day of the school year.

There was a discussion regarding the teacher's workday. In the draft, a half-day was the week of August 15-19, 2022, and the other half-day was on Friday, May 26, 2023. There were many ideas shared on what was best at different buildings for utilizing the workday. Some buildings wanted to be different from other buildings. This had been done in the past and Mrs. Knipp shared some of the challenges with different elementary buildings having a variety of workday schedules. A suggestion was to have flexibility with the workday. Dr. Lewton was receptive to treating the faculty like professionals and providing flexibility with the workday and some autonomy. It was noted that it would be imperative the teachers completed their responsibilities before they leave on Friday, May 26. Dr. Lewton will receive input from the Cabinet members at the next Cabinet meeting regarding the flexible workday.

The pros and cons of having only two days of school the week of Thanksgiving was discussed.

Dr. Lewton said the administrative Cabinet had discussed adding more early release days to the calendar. He asked for input from the classroom teachers and parents. It was decided there are enough early release days.

Mrs. Tibor shared the high school teachers expressed concerns with three days of professional development at the beginning of the year and classes resuming the following day. Teachers on the committee were not in favor of moving some of the professional development days to the week of August 15. There were suggestions for the professional development days which will be shared with the School Improvement Leadership Team.

Mr. Whitehead inquired if graduation could be moved to Friday or Saturday, May 26 or 27th. It was noted that having graduation on Sunday afternoon has been a tradition in the school district for a long time. Those on the committee with seniors shared their appreciation for graduation on Sunday. Having it on Sunday provides time for family to travel to attend graduation. Additionally, the state track meet was traditionally held on the Friday and Saturday before Memorial Day.

Ms. Francis explained she had a concern with an early release day on the Wednesday before Easter. It was not valid professional development time. Mrs. Hill suggested moving this early release to April. By consensus, the April 5, 2023, early release date was moved to Friday, April 28, 2023.

Interim Superintendent Lewton summarized the revisions made today.

- Thursday, May 25, 2023, early release moved to Friday, December 9, 2022.
- Wednesday, April 5, 2023, early release moved to Friday, April 28, 2023.
- Dr. Lewton will visit with Cabinet regarding a flexible workday the week of August 15-19 and May 26. Teacher responsibilities will need to be completed before leaving on May 26, 2023.

A revised draft 2022-2023 calendar incorporating the revisions will be emailed to the committee members on Thursday. The draft should be shared with others in their buildings.

Dr. Lewton inquired if another meeting was necessary. Mrs. Tibor requested an opportunity for the committee members to share the revised draft calendar with others in their building and report back. A follow-up meeting was scheduled for Thursday, December 9, 2021, at 4:00 p.m. via Zoom Meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.